BUSINESS / B1

SM group offers P92/share for EPCIBank

WORLD / A22

Israel probes conduct of Lebanon war

NEWS / A18

Erap documentary rated 'X' by MTRCB review committee

MOTORING / B10

The 'highs' and 'lows' of budget cars

LIFESTYLE / C1

Sand, surf & storm: 2bU!'s rainy Boracay guide

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
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Militant solon hits NPA for extortion

Etta: Firm punished for not paying P30-M 'tax'

By Michael Lim Ubac

A WELL-KNOWN LEFTIST leader has accused the communist New People's Army of "downright gangsterism" after NPA rebels torched a truck belonging to an export company that refused to pay P30 million in revolutionary taxes.

The Aug. 13 attack against the Bacolod City-based AlterTrade Corp. showed "the darker side of the revolutionary forces under the New People's Army of the Communist Party," militant lawmaker Etta Rosales said in a privilege speech in Congress on Monday night.

AlterTrade is managed by former NPA members who had gone into the business of exporting muscovado sugar and bananas.

"Its attempt at extorting money from reputable organizations, whose aim is to help the poor, is downright gangsterism and hypocritical," said Rosales, a member of the Akbayan party-list group.

Akbayan belongs to one of the factions of the country's deeply divided Left. On one side of the spectrum is the Communist Party of the Philippines that was founded by exiled leader Jose Ma. Sison.

The military has claimed the extortion of so-called revolutionary taxes from business firms and private individuals, including electoral candidates, is a major source of funds for the communist underground, enabling the NPA to sustain its operations around the country.

The military estimated the NPA collected P200 million annually in revolutionary taxes.

The INQUIRER sent an e-mail to the Communist Party's information bureau

MILITANT/ A6

Tanker captain admits work papers expired

By Leila B. Salaverria and Armand N. Nocum

THE CAPTAIN OF THE MT SOLAR I, which sank on Aug. 11 in Guimaras Strait with 2 million liters of bunker fuel oil on board, yesterday acknowledged that his certificates had expired and that he had no special training to handle oil tankers.

But Norberto Aguro said the big oil companies had not raised questions about his papers.

"Caltex, Petron and Shell evaluated my papers and they did not say anything. Once they saw the chemical tanker, there were no questions about my papers," Aguro told the Special Board of Marine Inquiry (SBMI).

The SBMI earlier found that Aguro' s certificates in general tanker familiarization and advance training on chemical tanker operations had expired in 2002.

Aguro said that he had been the captain

TANKER/ A8

Palace asks hospitals to consider '06 nurses

By Christine O. Avendaño, Christian V. Esguerra and Jerome Aning

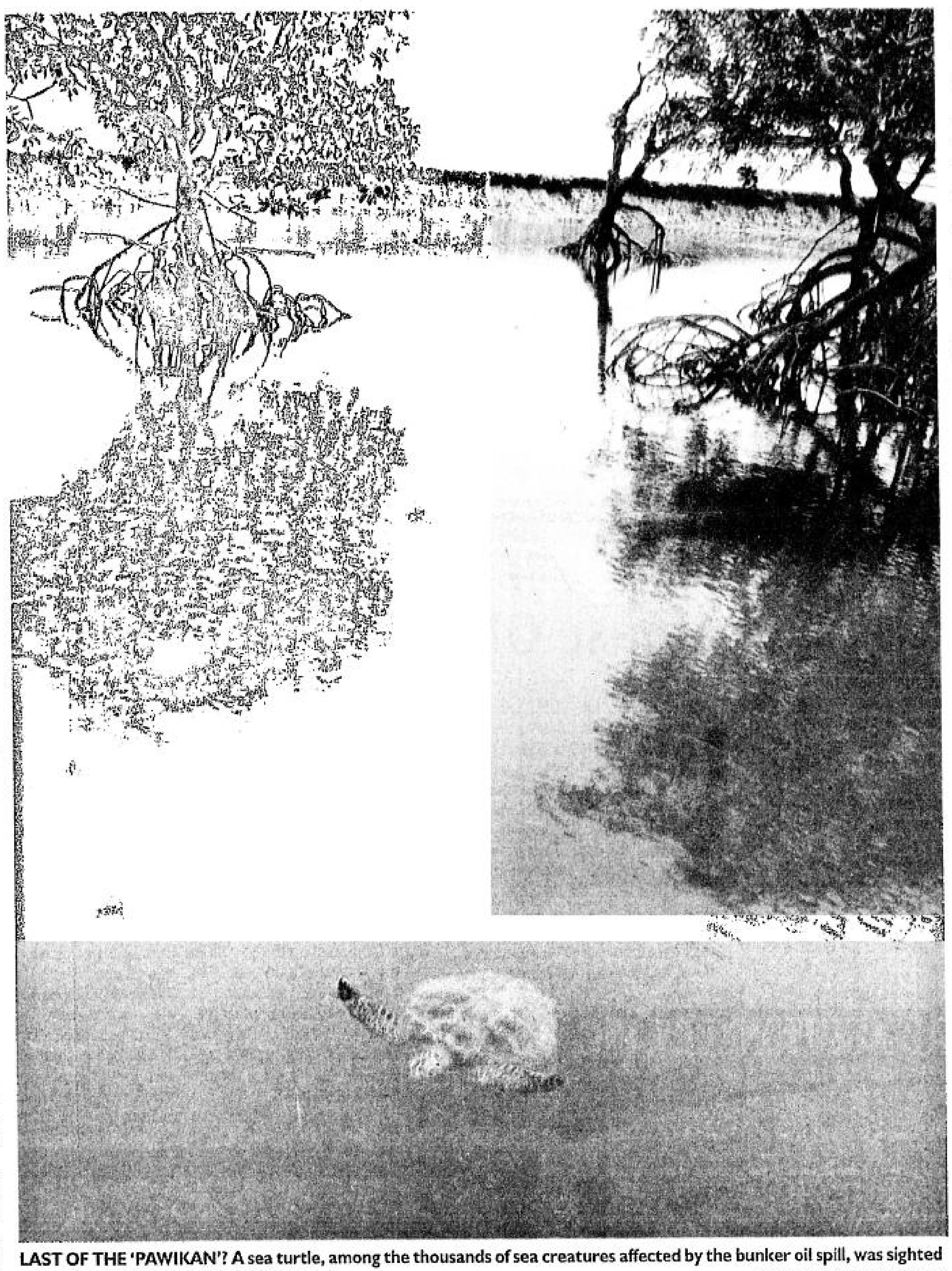
MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY APPEALED TO hospitals whose officials had decided not to hire those who passed the controversial 2006 nursing board exams to reconsider their decision.

"For we believe that those who passed this board exam fairly should not suffer from the

PALACE/ A6

LYN RILLON

SAY WHEN. President Macapagal-Arroyo waits for her cue from director Lupita Aquino-Kashiwahara (background) during Monday night's taping of a television interview held on the sandy beaches of Costa Aguada Resort on Inampulugan Island, Guimaras.



LAST OF THE 'PAWIKAN'? A sea turtle, among the thousands of sea creatures affected by the bunker oil spill, was sighted swimming near the shores of Guimaras.

ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

Guimaras folk evacuated from worst-hit areas

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas
and Christine O. Avendaño

NUEVA VALENCIA, GUIMARAS—PROVINCIAL officials have started to move out over 130 families living in two coastal villages worst-hit by the oil spill because of health risks.

Gov. JC Rahman Nava and Mayor Diosdado Gonzaga met with the residents and barangay officials yesterday and convinced them to leave their homes which were within the 100-meter risk zone from the shoreline as recommended

GUIMARAS/ A10

GMA execs snub probe of House allies

By Michael Lim Ubac

AS THE MELO COMMISSION BUCKLED down to work, a congressional committee began yesterday its own inquiry into judicial executions, but top defense and military officials snubbed the hearing.

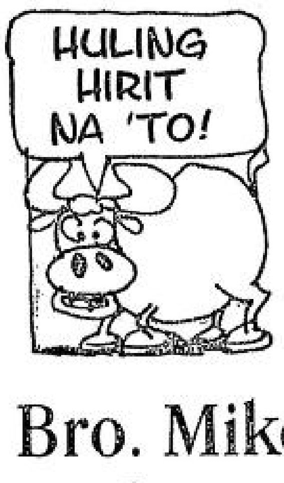
Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan and National Bureau of Investigation Director Nestor Mantaring stayed away from the hearing called by the House human rights committee.

They invoked Memorandum Circular No. 108 that set guidelines for appearances in congressional hearings under Executive Order No. 464.

Stung by the nonappearance, the committee adopted a strongly worded resolution condemning what they regarded as an act of disrespect and expressing "deep disappointment and concern."

Manila Rep. Bienvenido Abante, committee chair, said the four officials would be called again on Sept. 12. "Otherwise, we will be constrained to issue a subpoena for the third hearing so that they will be forced to appear before this committee. We don't want the government to insult this committee," said Abante.

GMA EXECS/ A8


HULING HIRIT NA 'TO!

Melo giving up 'sweet life' for 'last hurrah'

By Armand N. Nocum

FORMER SUPREME COURT ASSOCIATE JUSTICE Jose Melo has vowed to do right by his role as head of the commission investigating the killing of journalists and militant leaders, saying this was his "last hurrah" capping his 40 years in public service.

Melo, 74, said he was initially not that enthu-

MELO/ A8

GK volunteers: Best for the least

By Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

HE WAS THE FIRST FROM THE B.S. Psychology department of De La Salle University to graduate magna cum laude and, sure enough, he received several scholarship offers from medical schools in the United States.

But 21-year-old Paolo Domondon is putting all that on hold until 2010 to concentrate on Gawad Kalinga (GK) projects for the poorest of the poor.

Since GK started in 1995, the program has evolved into a movement that builds integrated, holistic and sustainable communities in depressed areas. It has constructed more than 850 housing developments for free for more than 100,000 families in various regions.

Paolo wants to see GK's "777" (700,000 homes in 7,000 communities in seven years) to the finish line. "How can I dream for myself while the poor can't?" the young GK volunteer asks.

Paolo has not given up o medical school, and when he's done, he promises to come back to work for GKalusugan, GK's health program.

Fil-American Eleanor Chichioco, 29, a business management graduate of Rutgers University in New Jersey, is here to work for two years to coordinate Answering the Cry of the Poor

GK VOLUNTEERS/ A7

MELOTO

Bro. Mike calls on GMA to show Cha-cha card

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

EL SHADDAI LEADER BRO. MIKE Velarde yesterday called on President Macapagal-Arroyo to declare her position on the people's initiative issue, and warned he would call out his millions of supporters to hold prayer rallies to block efforts to change the Constitution by that mode.

"I am vehemently opposed to the people's initiative," Velarde told the INQUIRER, referring to efforts by officials and groups identified with Ms Arroyo to overhaul the Constitution using a signature campaign.

The leader of the Catholic

BRO. MIKE/ A8

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FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Luzon will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/08/29/06

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Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
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In a statement released yesterday, the Department of Foreign Affairs said the Washington embassy had been informed that Bolante was "suffering from certain medical conditions that require urgent and specialized medical attention that might not be available at Mr. Bolante's detention facility."

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It said questions on the "specific medical and health condition" of Bolante "should be referred to (his) family."

It said the Philippine Consulate General in Chicago, which has consular jurisdiction over the Bolante case, to "look into the matter and provide Mr. Bolante with appropriate and necessary assistance."

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Under the latter act, the government is required to address the needs of Filipinos in distress, Asuque explained.

"It is the obligation of the con sulate to inform the host government [in this case, the United States] of the Filipino citizen's request," he said.

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"We are hoping [the US] will respond favorably to the request. What's important is the consulate has already informed the Chicago authorities of Mr. Bolante's needs," Asuque said.

He said it was the US prison authorities that would decide how they intend to address Bolante's "need for medical attention" since they have custody of Bolante. *Nikko Dizon*

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By Jerome Aning

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In separate interviews, the officials, who requested anonymity because they were not authorized to speak for the agency, told reporters the Comelec could not afford to defy the 1997 Supreme Court decision that permanently barred it from entertaining such an initiative.

"I think the commission will junk it because we're tied by the Supreme Court ruling, so unless that is reversed it should be obeyed," one of the officials said.

Another said, "I think we won't take cognizance [of the petition]. We will follow the decision of the Supreme Court or risk its anger."

"The Supreme Court said we could not entertain it so we will dismiss it," the third official said.

The Comelec law department, meanwhile, has forwarded to the en banc the initiative petition, including the signatures collected and the certifications of verification, as well as the eight suits opposing the initiative, department chief Alioden Dalaig said.

Comelec education and information department director James Arthur Jimenez said the opposing petitions filed by the citizens group OneVoice, Akbayan party-list and other groups were premature as the en banc had not yet decided to hear the Sigaw and Ulap petition.

"The opposition suits will be relevant once the Comelec decides to hear [the initiative petition]. As of now, the threshold question is whether they (commissioners) would take jurisdiction at all," Jimenez said.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said the en banc might come out with a ruling on Thursday or Friday.

A commissioner, Rene Soriano, said yesterday his lawyering for a group that had opposed the people's initiative conducted by the People's Initiative for Reforms, Modernization and Action (Pirma) in 1996 would not affect his stand on the new initiative.

Sarmiento was the lawyer of Demokrasya Ipagtanggol ang Konstitusyon headed by the late Supreme Court Justice Cecilia Muñoz-Palma. The anti-initiative group had worked to obtain the high court's 1997 ruling on the insufficiency of the current law on initiatives to amend the Constitution.

But for one law expert, the filing of the people's initiative petition in the Comelec presented the Supreme Court with an opportunity to "revisit" and take an "unambiguous" position on the sufficiency of the implementing law on initiatives as a means of changing the Constitution.

"Whichever way the Comelec goes on this petition, the contending party that feels aggrieved by this decision is expected to go to court to question it," said Dean Amado Valdez of the University of the East College of Law. *With Norman Bordadora*

PIATCO FIASCO

Gov't won't let go of Naia3

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG WILL NOT LET the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco) get its hands on the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 following an international arbitration court's order that the government turn over the expropriated facility to the consortium that built it.

"What is at stake here is the interest of the Filipino people and the sovereign prerogatives of the Philippine government under the rule of law. The Office of the Solicitor General will definitely line up its legal moves to back up the government's control over the terminal," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in a statement.

He said government lawyers "will definitely line up legal moves to back up the government's control of the terminal," he said.

Piatco has threatened to force a takeover of the the terminal tomorrow, Aug. 31, based on the Singapore-based International Chamber of Commerce Arbitration Court's order that the government return Naia 3 to Piatco.

Piatco sought arbitration from the ICC after the Supreme Court in 2002 upheld the Arroyo administration's decision to void Piatco's Naia 3 contract for being onerous and disadvantageous.

In December 2004, the government filed a case for expropriation with the Pasay court so it could take over the terminal. A month later, the court ordered the government to pay Piatco P3.3 billion as initial payment so it could issue a writ of possession to Naia 3.

The payment of the P3.3 billion has however been stymied by various court motions to intervene in the expropriation case and stop the payment to Piatco on the ground that it obtained its contract through fraud and corruption.

Last week, just as the government was ready to turn over the P3.3 billion to Piatco, the Court of Appeals issued a 60-day restraining order against payment.

Solicitor General Eduardo Nachura is unconcerned about the takeover threat from Piatco.

"The ICC order will become moot and academic once we pay Piatco the P3 billion down payment for its compensation which will automatically grant us writ of possession of Naia 3," said Nachura in a phone interview.

In its Aug. 23 decision, the ICC said the government could take possession of Naia 3 only if it had a valid writ of possession issued by a Philippine court.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez yesterday said the government was compelled to follow the ICC ruling since it allowed itself to be part of the arbitration proceedings in Singapore.

However, he stressed that it was still the SC decision that would prevail and that the ICC's arbitration proceedings were dependent on the pending expropriation case in the Pasay court.

"We are willing to comply with the Supreme Court decision. We fill first comply with the local decision. So much of this arbitration thing will also depend on [the local case]," Gonzalez said.

"We have expropriated this property. As long as payment [is made], it is considered the right of the state [to expropriate]," Gonzalez told justice reporters.

The government yesterday filed a motion to quash the petition filed by Rep. Salacnib Baterina to block the release of the P3.3 billion to Piatco.

Nachura expressed confidence that the court would act swiftly to remove the TRO.

Baterina questioned why the government wanted to pay Piatco without first determining the legal ownership of Naia 3.

He said the government cannot ask to expropriate Naia 3 because it is technically owned by the owner of the terminal's site, the state-owned Bases Conversion Development Authority, and that Piatco was merely a contractor.

House OKs supplemental budget

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTAtives approved last night on second reading the P46.42-billion supplemental budget for this year, including a P2-billion fund for the cleanup of the oil spill in Western Visayas and P14 million in assistance to help cover the cost of the possible holding of another set of exams for those who took the tainted June nursing board exams.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, chair of the House committee on appropriations, said the supplemental budget did not contain an appropriation for a plebiscite on Charter change.

The supplemental budget seeks to cover the funding gaps as a result of the reenactment of the 2005 national budget. Last year's budget was reenacted after the House and the Senate failed to approve the proposed budget of P1.05 trillion for 2006.

The proposed measure contains a P2-billion Oil Spill Abatement Fund to help clean up the oil spill in Guimaras and other areas, and P14 million in financial assistance to some 42,000 examinees who may have to retake Tests III and V of the controversial nursing exams administered in June. The exams were marred by cheating.

The supplemental budget will augment priority expenditures of the following:

Department of Agriculture, P3.59 billion; Department of Education, P9.58 billion; Department of Interior and Local Government, P1.42 billion; Department of Social Welfare and Development, P539 million.

Department of Transportation and Communication, P2.54 billion; the Commission on Elections' modernization program, P1.56 billion; miscellaneous and personal benefits, P4.92 billion; allocation for local government units (LGUs), P1.82 billion; pension and gratuity, P4.86 billion, and another allocation for LGUs, representing the internal revenue allotment, P14.86 billion. *Michael Lim Ubac*

Final Lafayette test run OKd

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONment and Natural Resources has given the go-signal for the last stage of the crucial test run which would decide the fate of Lafayette Philippines Inc.'s P1.4-billion Rapu-Rapu polymetallic mining project in Albay.

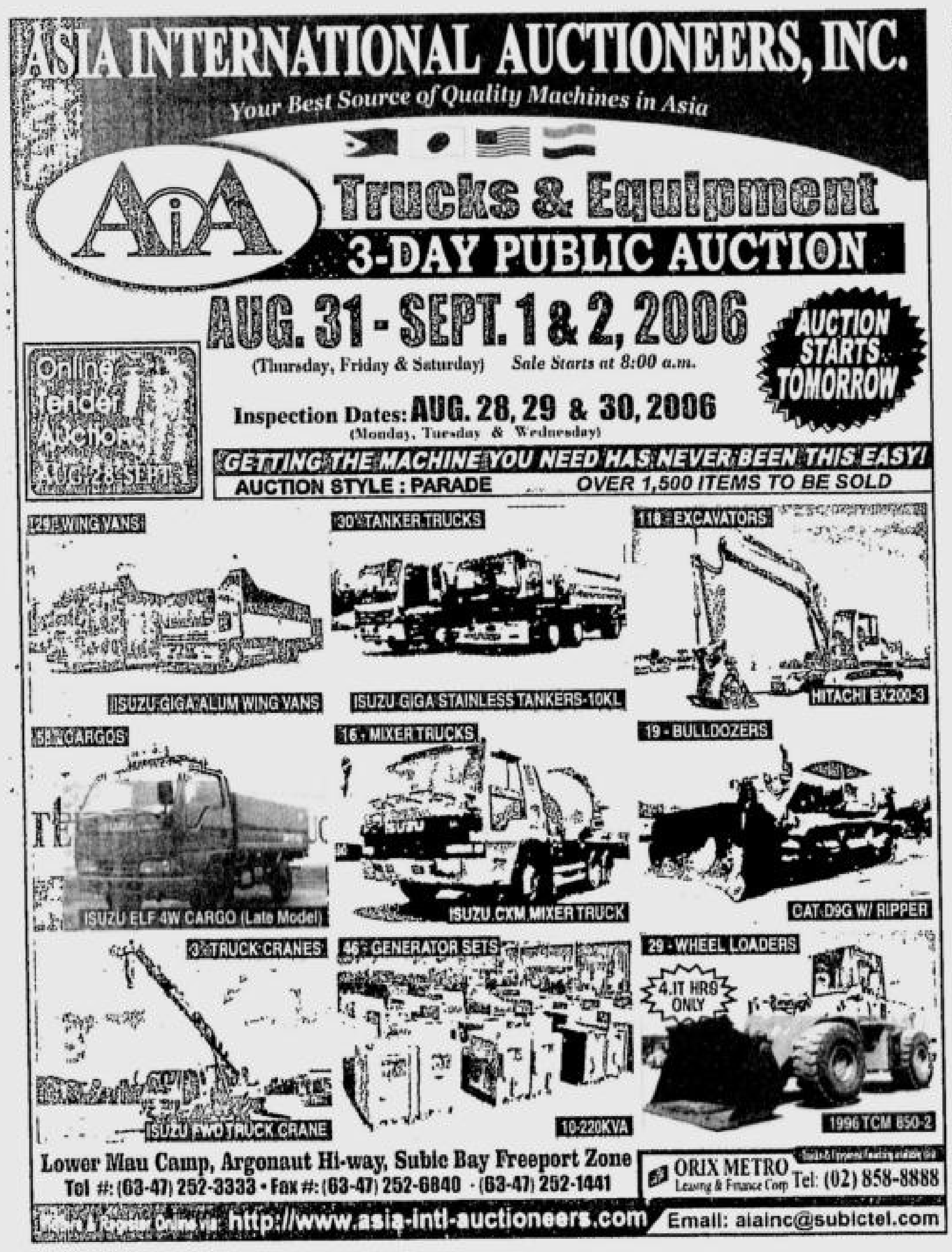
The Pollution Adjudication Board (PAB), a quasi-judicial body under the DENR, approved the conduct of the third stage of the three-stage test run in an order dated Aug. 24.

The last stage involves the actual operation of Lafayette's milling facility and other environmental safety infrastructure installed by the company to prevent another mine tailings spill and other environmental catastrophe.

The PAB, upon the recommendation of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, allowed Lafayette to operate at 30 percent capacity on the first day, 60 percent on the second day, 80 percent on the third day and at full capacity during the rest of the 15-day test run period.

"The emergency response system has already been verified to be adequate to address any incident or event such as spills or leakages that may occur during the milling operation," the Environmental Management Bureau in Region 5 said.

The EMB, whose recommendation was sought by the PAB, said Lafayette's pollution control program was adequate to ensure the management and containment of the generated mill effluents at full operations.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COMPILED BY: KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/08/29/06

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Second FrontPage

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However, he stressed that it was still the SC decision that would prevail and that the ICC's arbitration proceedings were dependent on the pending expropriation case in the Pasay court.

"We are willing to comply with the Supreme Court decision. We fill first comply with the local decision. So much of this arbitration thing will also depend on [the local case]," Gonzalez said.

"We have expropriated this property. As long as payment [is made], it is considered the right of the state [to expropriate]," Gonzalez told justice reporters.

The government yesterday filed a motion to quash the petition filed by Rep. Salacnib Baterina to block the release of the P3.3 billion to Piatco.

Nachura expressed confidence that the court would act swiftly to remove the TRO.

Baterina questioned why the government wanted to pay Piatco without first determining the legal ownership of Naia 3.

He said the government cannot ask to expropriate Naia 3 because it is technically owned by the owner of the terminal's site, the state-owned Bases Conversion Development Authority, and that Piatco was merely a contractor.

House OKs supplemental budget

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES approved last night on second reading the P46.42-billion supplemental budget for this year, including a P2-billion fund for the cleanup of the oil spill in Western Visayas and P14 million in assistance to help cover the cost of the possible holding of another set of exams for those who took the tainted June nursing board exams.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, chair of the House committee on appropriations, said the supplemental budget did not contain an appropriation for a plebiscite on Charter change.

The supplemental budget seeks to cover the funding gaps as a result of the reenactment of the 2005 national budget. Last year's budget was reenacted after the House and the Senate failed to approve the proposed budget of P1.05 trillion for 2006.

The proposed measure contains a P2-billion Oil Spill Abatement Fund to help clean up the oil spill in Guimaras and other areas, and P14 million in financial assistance to some 42,000 examinees who may have to retake Tests III and V of the controversial nursing exams administered in June. The exams were marred by cheating.

The supplemental budget will augment priority expenditures of the following:

Department of Agriculture, P3.59 billion; Department of Education, P9.58 billion; Department of Interior and Local Government, P1.42 billion; Department of Social Welfare and Development, P539 million.

Department of Transportation and Communication, P2.54 billion; the Commission on Elections' modernization program, P1.56 billion; miscellaneous and personal benefits, P4.92 billion; allocation for local government units (LGUs), P1.82 billion; pension and gratuity, P4.86 billion, and another allocation for LGUs, representing the internal revenue allotment, P14.86 billion. *Michael Lim Ubac*

Final Lafayette test run OKd

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONment and Natural Resources has given the go-signal for the last stage of the crucial test run which would decide the fate of Lafayette Philippines Inc.'s P1.4-billion Rapu-Rapu polymetallic mining project in Albay.

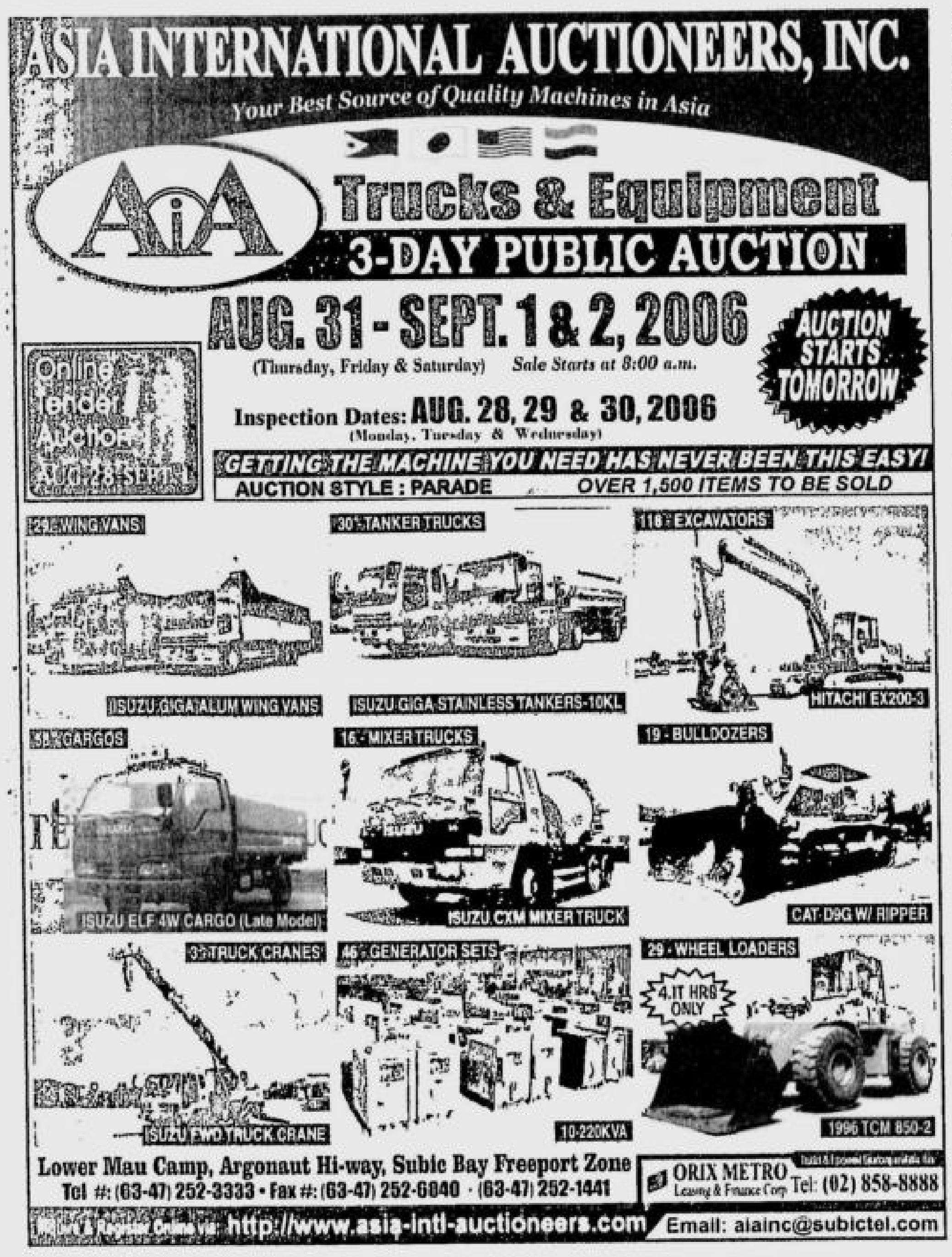
The Pollution Adjudication Board (PAB), a quasi-judicial body under the DENR, approved the conduct of the third stage of the three-stage test run in an order dated Aug. 24.

The last stage involves the actual operation of Lafayette's milling facility and other environmental safety infrastructure installed by the company to prevent another mine tailings spill and other environmental catastrophe.

The PAB, upon the recommendation of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, allowed Lafayette to operate at 30 percent capacity on the first day, 60 percent on the second day, 80 percent on the third day and at full capacity during the rest of the 15-day test run period.

"The emergency response system has already been verified to be adequate to address any incident or event such as spills or leakages that may occur during the milling operation," the Environmental Management Bureau in Region 5 said.

The EMB, whose recommendation was sought by the PAB, said Lafayette's pollution control program was adequate to ensure the management and containment of the generated mill effluents at full operations.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DepEd won't kick demoted Pluto out of textbooks yet

By Alcuin Papa

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DepEd) will have to wait for official word from the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) before it can revise textbooks to reflect the downgrade of Pluto from planet to dwarf planet.

Education undersecretary Fe Hidalgo said yesterday that they have yet to receive any official word from the International Astronomical Union (IAU) or the DOST on the downgrade of Pluto.

This means that information in science textbooks used by around 17 million public elementary and high school students around the country will not be changed just yet.

"We need to get the details from the source. Of course that is an official report coming from a recognized organization. So I've written to them to ask for more details. We want to get the full information about it," Hidalgo said.

She added that while official word on the matter is still pending, the DepEd can advise teachers in the field by giving them notes on the new change in the composition of our solar system.

"I have not talked to the Secretary (Jesli Lapus) about plans to revise the textbooks and other teaching materials ... Maybe what we can do at this stage before this is final is to provide teaching notes in the meantime that it is not yet corrected in the textbooks and to provide the teachers across the country the corresponding information."

Recently, the IAU took out Pluto from the list of planets since it is even smaller to the Earth's moon and that it is not a real planet.

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[1] Meister A. Cancer Res 1994;54(S):1969-1975.

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Think of your skin as a portrait or digital photograph in need of high-quality restoration or touch-up. With today's advancements, you can repair your skin – diminish wrinkles, skin discolorations and other signs of aging – like you would repair an old photogragh. As photographs are altered or retouched pixel by pixel, smoothing out irregularities and blemishes while restoring color and clarity, Fraxel Laser Treatment repairs damaged skin spot by spot, dot by dot, affecting only a fraction of your skin at a time with thousands of tiny microscopic laser spots. It's actually like digital tissue editing or retouching!

Fraxel Laser Treatment works by producing thousands of deep, tiny columns in your skin, known as microthermal treatment zones. Unlike ablative lasers that remove the top layer of skin, Fraxel is "fractional" in that it intensively treats old epidermal pigment cells, a very small fraction of the skin at a time, without affecting any of the surrounding tissue. This creates a unique wound-healing response by sparing healthy tissue. Hence, healing time is reduced and it promotes the skin's natural process to create new, healthier tissue to replace the damaged cells.

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A water-soluble blue tint is also applied on the treatment area to increase the contrast of tiny folds in the skin's surface, allowing the Fraxel laser handpiece to precisely read the discreet contours of the treatment area. The Fraxel handpiece is gently guided across the skin like an airbrush, painting micro-treatments beneath the surface of your skin. After the treatment, the blue tint and the anesthetic ointment are washed away

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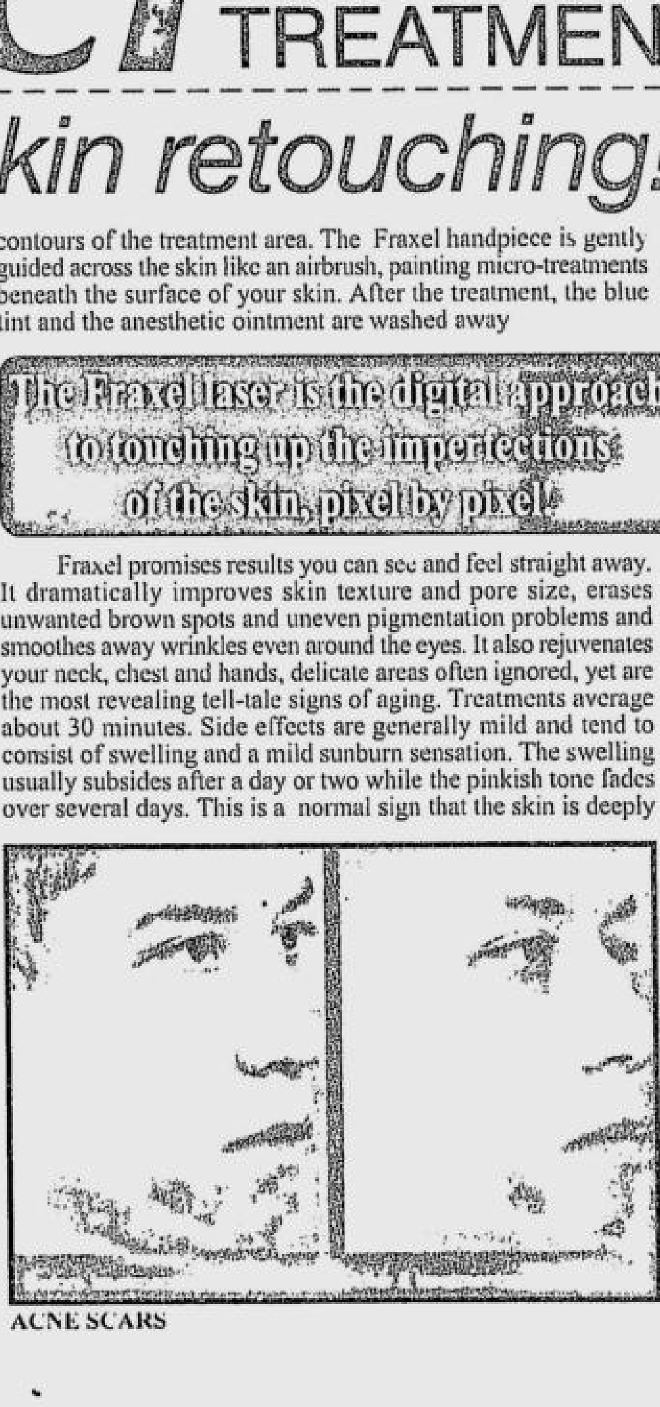

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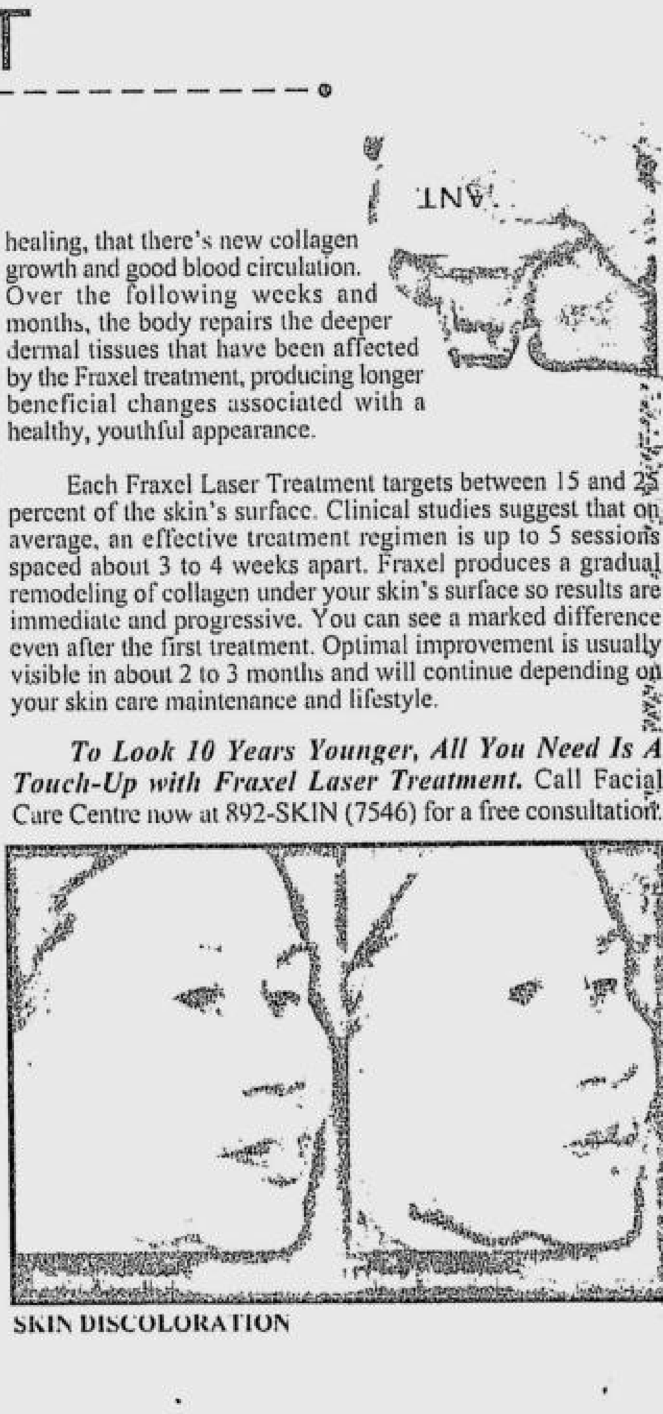

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Loren making 'road show' of protest, Noli lawyers say

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE TWO LAWYERS OF VICE PRESIDENT Noli de Castro yesterday accused former Sen. Loren Legarda of using her election protest before the Supreme Court, which is sitting as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (PET), as a "road show" just to put De Castro in a bad light.

Romulo Macalintal and Armando Marcelo, counsel to De Castro, said Legarda's latest statement that their client was trying to delay the hearing on the presentation of evidence in connection with the 2004 vice-presidential election was preposterous.

"The false accusations of Legarda after the preliminary conference last Aug. 28 confirmed what we have been suspecting all along, that this case is but a 'road show' or mere publicity to put a cloud of doubt on the election of Vice President De Castro," Macalintal and Marcelo said in a joint statement.

"This should put the public on guard when Legarda comes out with her supposed evidence of electoral fraud," they said.

Macalintal said that Legarda had no basis to say that decisions of the PET to reject De Castro's motions to suspend for a month the hearing as well as to replace former Supreme Court Justice Bernardo Pardo as hearing officer was a "double blackeye" on the vice president whom she had accused of massive election cheating.

"How can Legarda accuse us of delaying the proceedings when we agreed to have the hearing on Sept. 4 instead of Sept. 6 as proposed by Loren's lawyers?" Macalintal asked.

Macalintal said that it was, in fact, De Castro who filed the motion for partial determination of the election protest based on the results of the revision of the ballots from Cebu and the recanvass of election returns of Lanao del Sur "precisely to expedite the proceedings instead of waiting for the revision of all the ballots from the Legarda's other pilot provinces."

Macalintal said that Legarda would just be wasting her money and the time of the PET justices if she could not recover a substantial number of votes from Cebu and Lanao del Sur.

In the Congress overall tally, De Castro got 15,100,431 as against Legarda's 14,218,709 votes.

In the Cebu tally alone, De Castro garnered 886,910 votes against Legarda's 198,372 votes.

Macalintal said they only filed a motion for reconsideration to make sure that the Constitution was followed with respect to the rule that the Supreme Court shall be the sole judge of election protest involving the presidency and the vice presidency.

Isabela gov, PWU head to speak at Hawaii women's gab

TWO OF THE COUNTRY'S WOMEN leaders, educator Amelou B. Reyes and Gov. Grace Padaca of Isabela province, are featured speakers during the 3rd International Women's Leadership Conference today (Aug. 29; Hawaii time) at Sheraton Waikiki Hotel in Hawaii, USA.

They will talk on the conference theme "Women with No Limits" upon the invitation of Hawaii Gov. Linda Lingle, who was the keynote speaker last January at the symposium "Issues in Women Empowerment" hosted by the National Council of Women of the Philippines (NCWP) held at the Philippine Women's University. Reyes is president of the NCWP and PWU.

Amelita Go, national president of the Girl Scouts of the Philippines and NCWP institutional director, will likewise participate in the conference.

Other invited speakers are US undersecretary of state for diplomacy Karen Hughes, executive director of American Islamic Congress Zainab Al-Suwaigi, president of Marrill Lynch Japan Securities Co. Izumi Kobayashi and president of Hawaiian Electric Industries and American Saving Bank Constance Lau.

Also joining Padaca and Reyes as speakers are Admiral Brice O' Hara; Vivian Aiona, conference moderator and wife of Lt. Gov. James Aiona Jr.; Renee Amoore, president of the Amoore Group; and TV personality Paige Hemmis, president and CEO of Tuff Chix, Inc.

Videotape messages of US First Lady Laura Bush, top TV host and philanthropist Oprah Winfrey and Dr. Johanette Cole will be shown during the one-day conference presented by the Office of the Governor, state of Hawaii.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, August 30, 2006
21st Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading:	2 Thes 3:6-10, 16-18
Gospel:	Matthew 23:27-32

Jesus said, "Woe to you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs beautiful in appearance, but inside there are only dead bones and uncleanness. In the same way you appear as religious to others, but you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness within.

Woe to you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous. You say: Had we lived in the time of our ancestors, we would not have joined them in the blood of prophets. So, you yourselves confess to be kins of those who murdered the prophets. And now, finish off what your ancestors began!"

Commentary

Paul and the others make themselves the models who are to be imitated, working day and night on their behalf, not even depending on them for food. Those who can work are supposed to work and peace is to be the mark of their gatherings. Jesus is about the hard work of telling those among the people who have authority that they are whitewashed tombs, rotting, with holy exteriors, frauds and hypocrites and liars. They would have joined in with their ancestors in shedding prophets' blood. And they will be a part of shedding Jesus' blood. And who are we—frauds, rotting inside and very devoted on the outside? What would Jesus have to say to us?

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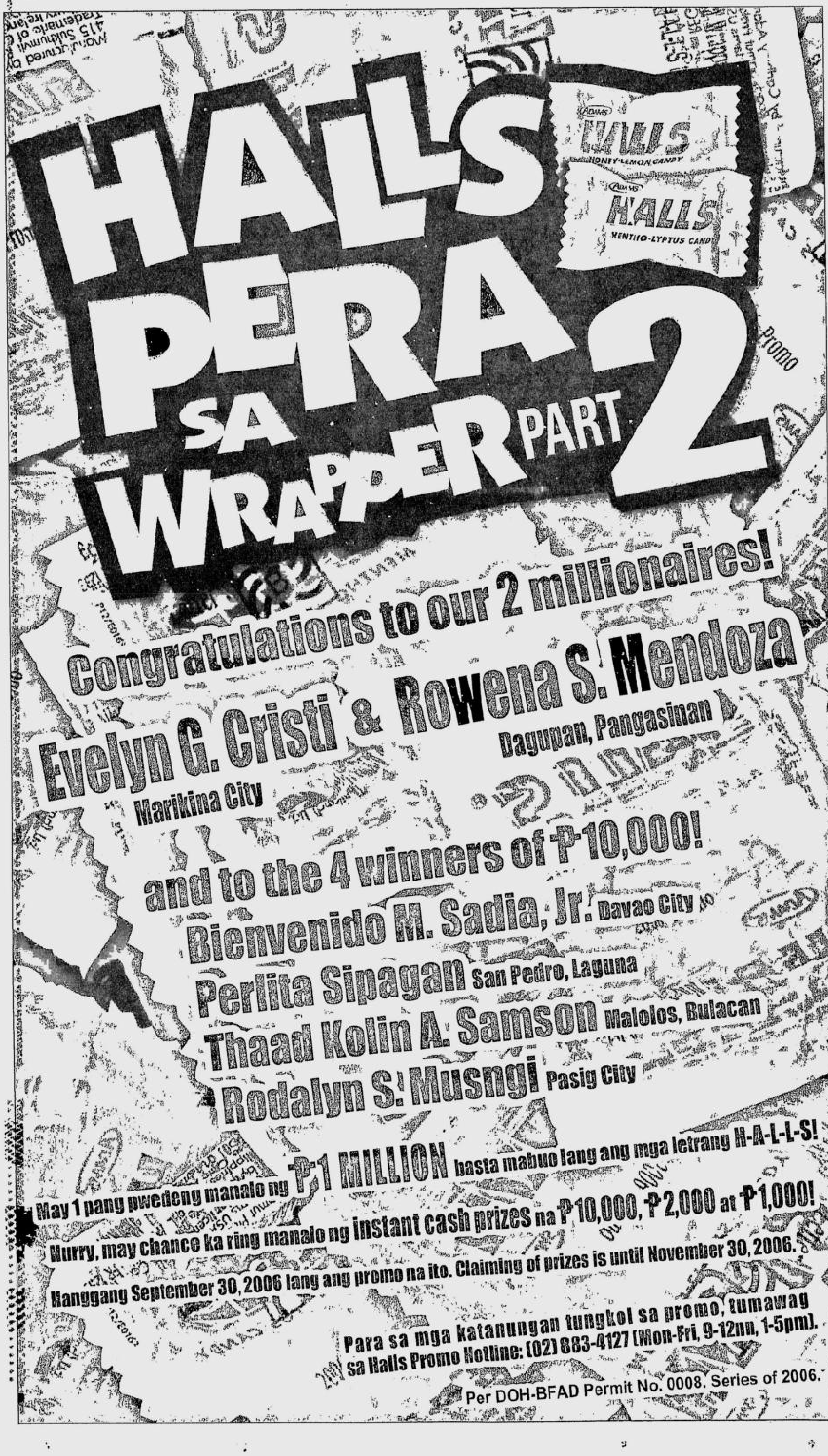

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Per DOH-BFAD Permit No. 0008. Series of 2006.

Puno denies he's seeking post as PM

By Norman Bordadora

INTERIOR SECRETARY RONALDO PUNO YESterday denied that he was eyeing the position of prime minister under a parliamentary system of government.

Puno reaffirmed yesterday the loyalty of his Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino, President Macapagal-Arroyo's original party, to the ruling coalition in the House of Representatives led by the Lakas-CMD of Speaker Jose De Venecia.

"I have never been interested in occupying the post of Prime Minister nor have I aspired to be one. Kampi remains steadfast in its commitment with Lakas to fully support its bid to remain as the dominant political party in the House of Representatives," Puno said.

Puno, who went on leave as president of Kampi when he resigned as Antipolo representative in the House to become interior secretary, made the remarks after reports surfaced that he had plans to become prime minister when a parliamentary government under a changed constitution is already in place.

"If ongoing efforts to effect a shift to a parliamentary system succeeds, I will personally support De Venecia as the first prime minister under the interim Parliament. I am confident that my party mates in Kampi will do the same," Puno said.

Reports attributed to Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos said Kampi was pirating members from various parties to corner the highest number of seats under a parliamentary system as Puno gears up to be Prime Minister.

"Far from challenging Lakas' dominance, Kampi has even joined forces with the Speaker's party in solidifying the stand of the President's allies on various issues and political concerns," Puno said.

Puno said that while he respects the opinions of Rep. Imee Marcos, "she apparently was fed the wrong reports by her sources on this issue."

He likewise reiterated that Kampi, like Lakas, prefers amending the Constitution by convening Congress into a constituent assembly, rather than through a People's Initiative.

Fr. Cortes, biblical scholar, dies; 64

THE DOMINICAN BIBLICAL SCHOLAR, FR. Regino Cortes, O.P., the only Filipino and Asian member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission of the Holy See, died Sunday evening of complications from diabetes. He was 64.

Cortes had just finished a spiritual conference for students of the College of Fine Arts and Design, where he was regent, when he collapsed in his room at the UST Fathers Residence, UST officials said.

He was rushed to the UST Hospital but physicians failed to revive him.

"He had long had a lingering diabetes," said UST secretary-general Fr. Isidro Abano.

A professor of Sacred Scriptures at the UST Ecclesiastical Faculties, Father Cortez was appointed in 2001 by the late Pope John Paul II to the Pontifical Biblical Commission.

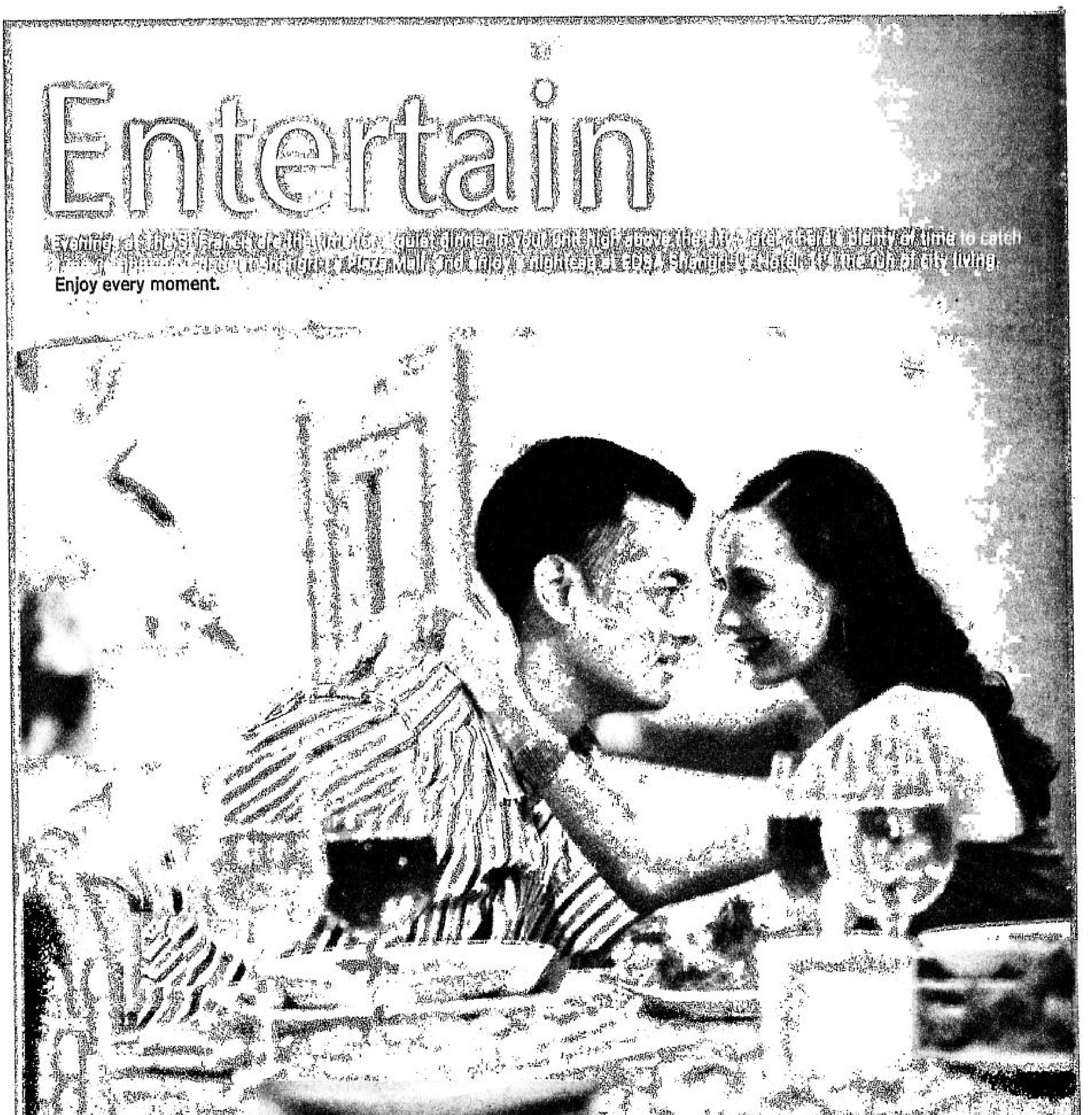
He had taken up biblical studies at the renowned École Biblique et Archéologique Française in Jerusalem. He had also studied Arabic at the American University of Cairo and Islamology at the Institut Dominicain d' Etudes Orientale also in Cairo, Egypt.

Born in 1942 in Batan, Aklan, Father Cortes entered the Order of Preachers (Dominicans) in 1956, made his solemn profession in 1963, finished his Philosophy and Sacred Theology at UST, and was ordained a priest in 1966. He was sent to Rome and Jerusalem after that to continue his biblical studies.

In the Philippines, Fr. Cortes was a leading light of the Catholic Biblical Association of the Philippines and the Filipino Association of Biblical Scholars.

Recently, Father Cortes achieved mainstream renown when he wrote "The Da Vinci Code: An Exegetical Review," published by the UST Publishing House, which rebutted historical and theological flaws in the best-selling novel, "The Da Vinci Code," by American writer Dan Brown.

Father Cortes will be buried by the Dominican community today at 2 p.m. after a necrological Mass at the UST Church. *Lito B. Zulueta*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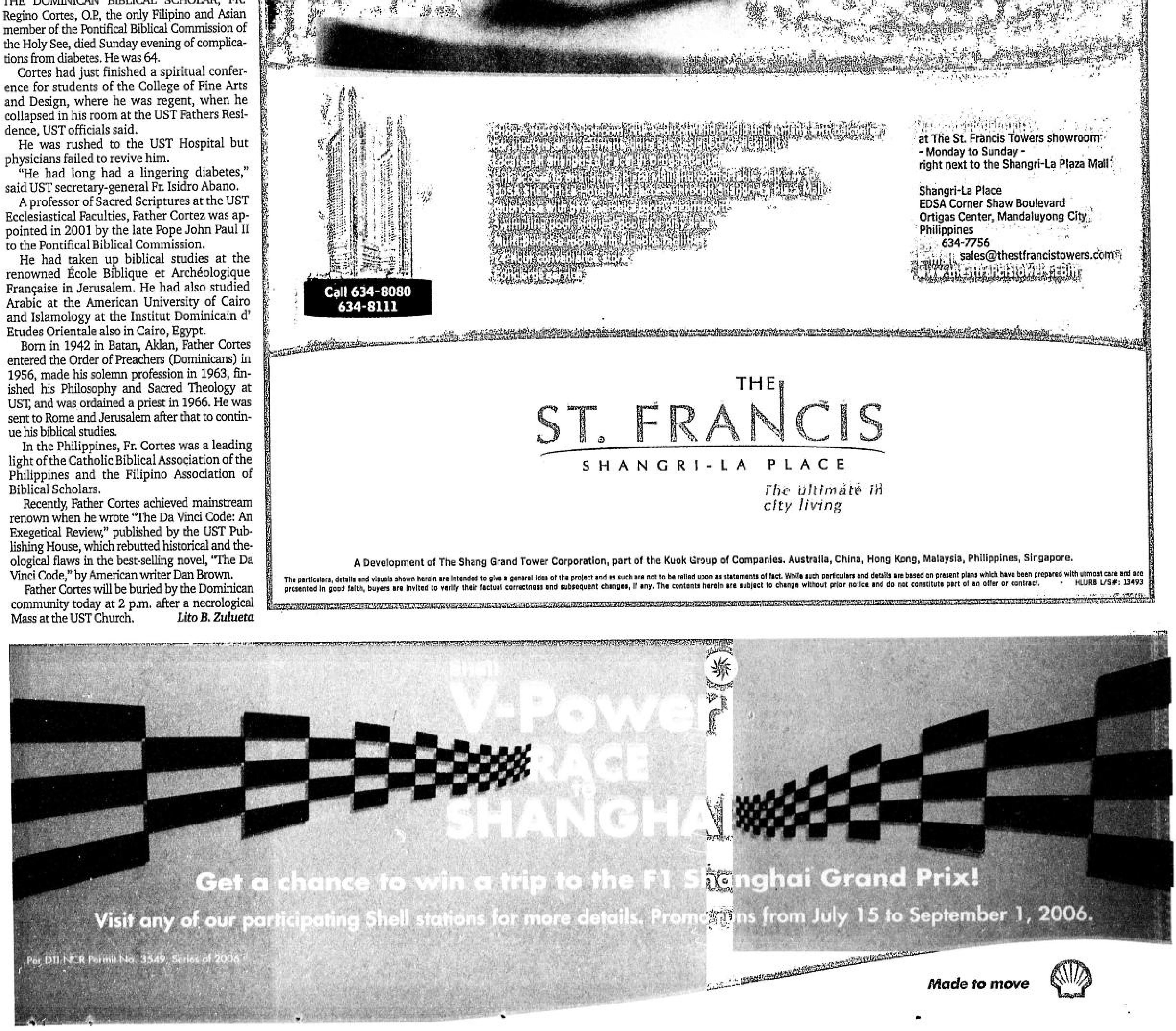
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Made to move

Militant solon hits NPA for extortion

From page A1

seeking a reaction, but had received no response at press time.

In past interviews, communist spokesperson Gregorio Rosal said payment of revolutionary tax to the NPA had become a "normal business process."

Rosal said doing business in the country meant paying taxes to two governments, one "reactionary" and the other revolutionary.

He said that as a separate government, the communist movement had the right to impose taxes on people and businesses in its controlled areas.

In her privilege speech titled "NPA extortion is alive and kicking," Rosales portrayed the AlterTrade case as an example of "revolutionary taxation as extortion."

For refusing to shell out P30 million, the company truck hauling bananas was burned in Toboso, Negros Occidental. Officials of the company said the attack paralyzed its operations because the vehicle was its only means of hauling the bananas of poor growers in the area.

War without winners

"In this war, nobody wins and it is innocent, unarmed civilians who suffer," Rosales said.

"The NPA cannot and should not display behavior that runs contrary to its self-proclaimed role of being the people's protector," she said.

Rosales said the NPA's use of arms to exact fees from entities, like AlterTrade, whose peaceful constituencies benefit from its programs must not be allowed to pass unnoticed.

"The NPA must learn to respect that not all those who want to see societal change can be bullied into turning a blind eye to its less than savory practices," the lawmaker said.

Military line

"But the NPA seems to have lost sight of this, and is instead training its sights on easy prey for sustenance, at no regard to the cost. This practice must not be condoned and I enjoin my colleagues to join me in condemning the NPA and persuade the CPP from continuing this practice."

Rosales said that this was the same practice that Akbayan found unacceptable when it filed House Bill No. 1952 prohibiting payment of permit-to-campaign fees to rebels during an election period.

Rosales said she was not falling for the military's "trite propaganda line" that revolutionary taxation was simply extortion in an attempt to discredit the NPA.

Party treasury

She flayed the military for its denial of involvement in the killing of hundreds of activists belonging to progressive groups but, in the same breath, she denounced "the less than exemplary activities" of the NPA.

She said the NPA had been trying to collect the money from AlterTrade since a few years back and recently sent feelers for "collection."

In a letter, the CPP-Negros Island Regional Party Committee demanded that "P30 million [be] turned over to the Party treasury," she said.

Portions of the letter demanded that AlterTrade "take positive response to the will of the Party" and reminded the firm that "whatever action [AlterTrade] takes will be dealt with accordingly by the Party."

AlterTrade then sought help from its friends.

According to Rosales, the matter was first brought up with Philippine authorities and foreign governments, which had been involved in the peace process, and also with trade partners of AlterTrade.

As a result of that intervention, the CPP-NPA did not pursue its demand but warned AlterTrade that the problem was not yet over, Rosales said.

Poor man's sugar

She said what made the case of AlterTrade different was that it was not a giant corporation, like the telecommunication or mining companies whose properties had been torched in the past by NPA rebels.

She said AlterTrade was born out of the "hunger epidemic" that struck Negros in the '80s when sugar prices plummeted in the world market, driving thousands of farm workers and their families into poverty.

Seeing that initial relief efforts were not enough to meet the needs of the communities, talks began on how to orient the Negros families toward self-sufficiency, Rosales said.

With the help of well-meaning Japanese nongovernment organizations and consumer groups, AlterTrade was formed in 1987, following a series of consultations on how to go about equipping Negros families with the "tools and skills necessary to help break down the social inequity and power relations that lie at the core of the famine that struck the province," Rosales said.

She said the company borrowed P50,000 as seed capital and received an advance payment of P450,000 from its Japanese partners to start its muscovado operations.

Muscovado, largely seen as the "poor man's sugar," took the brand name Mascobado, or "mas," meaning the masses, or the common people.

Thus, Mascobado means "people's sugar" to contrast with the sugar produced by the *hacenderos* (ranchers) and the big multinational milling companies, according to Rosales.

Rosales said the NPA action violated international humanitarian laws as it entailed the use of force and intimidation against noncombatants.

This was also a patent disregard of the agreement on respect for human rights adopted in peace talks between the government and the rebels, she said. *With a report from Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon and Inquirer Research*

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Palace asks hospitals to consider '06 nurses

From page A1

dishonest acts of an erring few," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a statement.

Some hospitals like the Philippine General Hospital said they were not entertaining anyone who "passed" the recent nursing board exams because of the legal issues.

The Court of Appeals directed the Professional Regulation Commission on Aug. 18 to stop the oath-taking of the June passers scheduled for Aug. 22. But hundreds were able to take their oath before the Court of Appeals issued a temporary restraining order.

Some groups now want the court to nullify the oath-taking. Of the 42,006 who took the June exams, 17,821 passed.

Bunye reiterated President Macapagal-Arroyo's stand that compelling those who passed to retake the exam was unnecessary and unfair, particularly to those who come from poor families that had worked hard for their children to enter this noble profession.

But the President appeared to have changed her position. She said she was leaving it up to Dr. Leonor Tripon-Rosero, chair of the Professional Regulation Commission, to find the solution by which "the guilty should be punished and the not guilty, should not be punished."

"What would the impact of that be on the retake? We will ask her (Rosero) suggestion," Ms Arroyo said Monday night on Inampulugan Island in Guimaras.

Nursing officials are convinced that the only way to put to rest the cheating controversy surrounding the June nursing board exams is to have the "passers" retake at least Tests III and V soon.

The nursing officials are also against Ms Arroyo's plan to place all nursing review centers under the supervision of the Commission on Higher Education (CHEd).

At least two review centers have been identified as having leaked questions and answers to Test III (medical-surgical nursing) and Test V (psychiatric nursing).

Fund-raising campaign

Ruth Padilla, former president of the Philippine Nurses Association, yesterday said that a number of individuals and groups had expressed willingness to help shoulder the expenses for taking the exams again.

"The Philippine Nurses Association of America will hold a fund raising to help examinees should they have to retake Tests III and V," Padilla said at a press conference.

More prominent nursing schools like those of the University of Santo Tomas, the University of the Philippines and St. Paul University are even willing to accommodate the June examinees in their review sessions, according to Padilla.

"(But) the government should also shoulder the expenses or give its fair share in the endeavor," she said.

Each examinee paid P900 to take the exams on June 11-12.

Special budget from Congress

Dante Ang, who heads an inter-agency task force looking into the leakage, asked Congress to appropriate P10 million for the holding of a second set of exams so that the nursing graduates would not have to pay any fees.

Speaking at a press conference at the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel in Manila, Ang said he was going to insist that all nurses who took the recent board exams retake them to restore confidence in all new Filipino nursing graduates.

"We must let a culture of excellence prevail, not a culture of mediocrity. Let's not be wishy-washy on this. A retake is the most correct and most honorable thing to do," said Ang, chair of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas.

All exam takers, whether they passed or not, cheated or not, were affected by the leakage scandal that broke out, according to Ang. He said a retake would protect the integrity of the state-run examination system.

Review center as business

At the other press conference, Dean Josefina Tuason of the UP College of Nursing expressed apprehension over Ms Arroyo's decision to place review centers under the jurisdiction of the CHEd.

The CHEd oversees all colleges and universities in the country. At present, review centers are regulated only by the Department of Trade and Industry as business entities.

"If you add the review centers to the responsibilities of CHEd—when in fact CHEd already has difficulty regulating the many schools of nursing—these would only add to the work," Tuason said.

The CHEd is preparing guidelines for its supervision of nursing review centers.

"While waiting for the executive order to come out, we are drafting the IRR (implementing rules and regulations) so that when the EO is issued, we can proceed with the implementation," CHEd Chair Dr. Carlito Puno said.

Unethical practices

It is the inadequate regulation of nursing schools that has resulted in "unprofessional and unethical practices" and the rise of review centers, according to Tuason.

"It's the nursing schools that have primary responsibility to give quality nursing education," she said. "The bottom line is the regulation of nursing schools. They have abrogated their basic responsibility of rendering good, quality nursing education."

Tuason said the nursing program through its deans and faculty members should be strengthened and the facilities and all related learning experiences improved.

She noted that very few students enrolled at 475 nursing schools around the country were getting hands-on experience.

Tuason wasn't amenable to the proposal that nursing schools set up an in-house review centers.

"They will again make money out of nursing students," she said. "It's a nonstop business of making money out of the nursing students."

Choose nursing schools

But while wide-ranging reforms in nursing education were yet to be implemented, she asked aspiring nurses and their families to carefully choose schools.

She said one important indicator was a school's passing rate that could be accessed from CHEd records.

"Don't go to schools that won't prepare you properly," Tuason said.

Marilyn Lorenzo, director of the UP Institute of Health Policy and Development Studies, said nursing schools should change the way they see nursing education.

"The values of schools should change... because if they would look at nursing education as a business, this is what happens," she said, referring to the controversy and the apparently poor quality of education offered by a number of nursing schools.

Carmelita Divinagracia, head of the Association of Deans of Philippine Colleges of Nursing, said it was high time that nursing schools improve their programs so students would no longer be dependent on review centers.

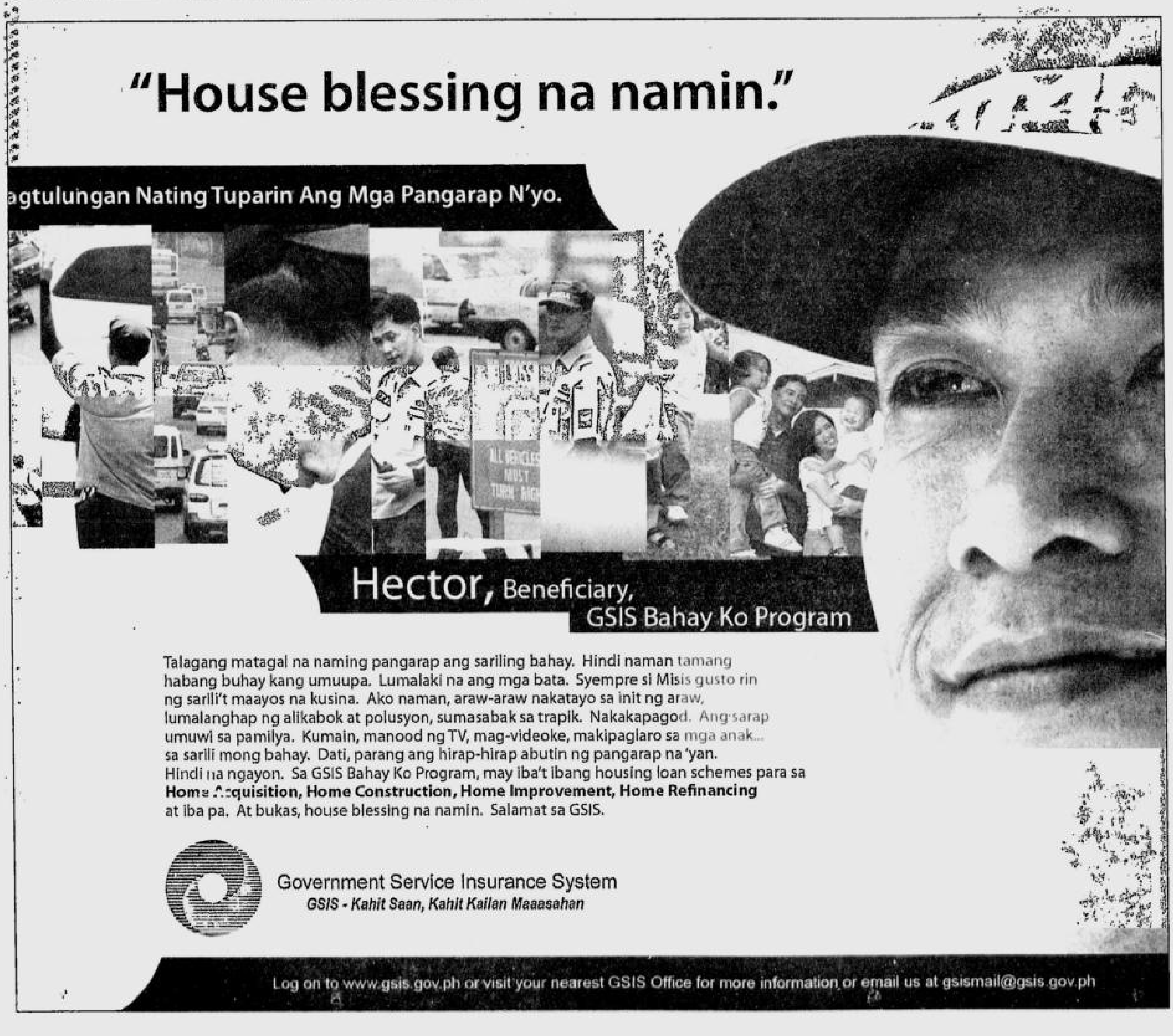
"If we strengthen the nursing program, there will no longer be any need for review centers," she said.

Passing grade of 48 percent

Ang said the passing grade for the board was actually lowered to 48 percent by the PRC when it recomputed the scoring for the portions of the exams that were leaked.

Under Republic Act No. 9173 or the Nursing Act of 2002, a board examinee, in order to pass, must get a general average of at least 75 percent with a rating of not below 60 percent in each part of the exam.

"What happened was the bar of excellence was lowered. By lowering the passing average, the level of competence of our nurses, whether they cheated or not, was also been lowered," Ang said. *With a report from Alcuin Papa*



"House blessing na namin."

Pagtulungan Nating Tuparin Ang Mga Pangarap N'yo.

Hector, Beneficiary, GSIS Bahay Ko Program

Talagang matagal na naming pangarap ang sariling bahay. Hindi naman tamang habang buhay kang umuupa. Lumalaki na ang mga bata. Syempre si Misis gusto rin ng sarili't maayos na kusina. Ako naman, araw-araw nakatayo sa init ng araw, lumalanghap ng alikabok at polusyon, sumasabak sa trapik. Nakakapagod. Ang sarap umuwi sa pamilya. Kumain, manood ng TV, mag-videoke, makipaglaro sa mga anak... sa sarili mong bahay. Dati, parang ang hirap-hirap abutin ng pangarap na 'yan. Hindi na ngayon. Sa GSIS Bahay Ko Program, may iba't ibang housing loan schemes para sa **Home Acquisition, Home Construction, Home Improvement, Home Refinancing** at iba pa. At bukas, house blessing na namin. Salamat sa GSIS.

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GK volunteers: Best for the least

From page A1

(Ancop) USA's linkup with GK.

"I didn't understand poverty until I saw it here," says Eleanor whose family migrated to the United States when she was a kid. Eleanor has learned to live simply, adjust to the Philippine situation and overcome occasional bouts of homesickness. She's found a family in GK.

Aurora Pijuan, 1970 Miss International, has been with GK for two years now. "Use me, abuse me," she told GK. She joined GK on one condition: "That I can do something."

It was her disgust with government that fired this desire. "I thought, let's just do something." Aurora is now busy coordinating GK Ilonggo in her home province of Negros Occidental and on Panay Island. She also travels to make GK known to those who want to help.

These are just three people who cast their lot on a Filipino movement for the country's poorest. They have found GK to be their pearl of great price, so to speak, the ideal channel for their energies and talents, the fulfillment of their desire to serve. Reaping awards was not on their agenda.

There are more where they come from.

First twin wins

This is the first time in the history of the prestigious award-giving body, the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, to award both a person and the organization or movement he represents as twin winners in any category.

Antonio "Tony" Meloto, GK founder and prime mover, is this year's winner of the RM Award for Community Leadership. GK Community Development Foundation is the other winner of the RM Award for Community Leadership. Meloto and GK will each be given honors and the cash prize.

(Founded 49 years ago, RMAF was named after the late President Ramon Magsaysay. It honors individuals and institutions that have selflessly served and made a great impact on their respective fields while exhibiting greatness of spirit. The awards are given in five categories.)

GK is a movement under the Couples for Christ (CFC) that has taken the country by storm through its housing program for the poor. Since it started 11 years ago, GK has expanded its programs to the poor of other countries, among them, East Timor, Cambodia, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and soon, India. Help—in the form of material and otherwise—comes from individuals and institutions over the globe.

850 GK communities

Tony tries to explain the GK phenomenon: "It is really the spirit of People Power on the ground. GK is so visual and experiential. Everyone with a GK experience becomes an advocate."

GK attracts individuals and organizations not necessarily affiliated with CFC, as well as business groups, local governments and foreign entities.

Much has been written about GK's phenomenal growth. The attention and recognition have been unceasing these past few years and Tony is hard put trying to deflect the attention away from himself.

The story of his life has been told again and again—his simple rural childhood, the big break he got because of an Ateneo scholarship, getting rich and all that, until, he says, God led him to the CFC and back to the people he had left behind.

But indeed, as Tony says, there are so many great stories still left untold. And these are not just about the poor communities and families that GK has transformed, but also about the GK volunteers who, like Jesus' disciples, heeded the call and "left all."

No turning back

Mike Goco, 60, an MBA graduate of the Ateneo, used to be president of Private Development Corporation of the Philippines (PDCP) and was vice president at Metro Pacific. In 2002, he shucked his corporate getup and retired early to volunteer full-time with GK.

"My colleagues thought I was crazy," Mike says.

He put in place GK's finance system and now heads the finance department.

Eena Kanapi was with international advertising company Ogilvy & Mather as strategic planning director, a high post that gave her a great income, opportunities to go places, meet interesting people and further hone her marketing skills.

"I was thriving in it, but there was always this aching for the country and the poor," says this graduate of St. Scholastica's College and the University of the Philippines. "That's why I took up political science," Eena adds. Now she has found the road back and there is no turning around.

"I fell in love with the Filipino," is how she describes her GK experience. She now works as an all-around executive assistant to Tony and for GK. She got the jolt when she first heard businessman Jose Concepcion speak about GK and saw him cry.

"Oh no, this is it," Eena, who was so well-entrenched in the world of advertising, told herself. But how? It was the Bible that she turned to for answers. And she has never regretted her decision.

Giving back

Joey Moreno was Philippine country head of Swiss Reinsurance but retired a year early to be a full-time GK volunteer. This Ateneo graduate who finished his MBA at Stanford University is now in charge of GK's administration. "I've always wanted to give something back," Moreno says.

Dylan Wilk of Britain gave up his extravagant lifestyle to devote his time to helping the Philippines through GK.

The INQUIRER also chanced upon a bunch of new architects—Josemari Badilla and Felix Doydora from Adamson University, and Cedric Belen, Bernice Venezuela and Angel Perez from UST—who were urgently drawing up plans for a GK site on a nonworking holiday.

One million heroes

Eena talks about GK 1MB (*isang milyong bayani* or one million heroes) that GK is targeting. It is an inclusive, all-embracing move to recognize the potential of the Filipino to do great things for others, especially the least.

For her, the RM Award is an affirmation of GK's viability and sustainability, an encouragement for volunteers like herself.

Aurora, the international beauty titlist, wants to debunk the Filipino belief that "the rich are greedy and the poor are lazy."

"Redefining the elite" was in fact, one of the topics the GK volunteers have been discussing.

"We just have to care," Aurora emphasizes. "The affluent are looking for something to believe in, and they are touched when they learn about GK."

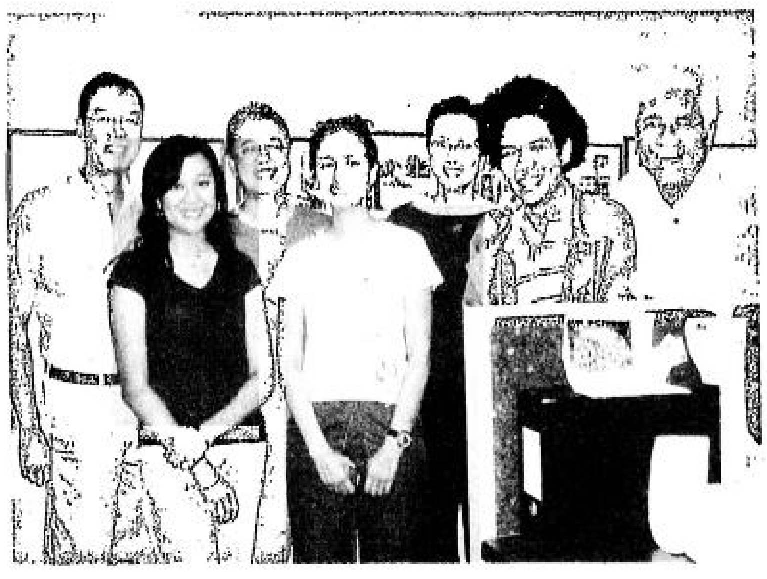
And so even while GK has to deal with both the financial elite and the financially deprived, money is not the thing that would bridge the gap. "GK does not focus on the funds," Tony reminds, "but on the hearts and minds."

For Mike, the corporate world he left behind is now a world away. "You cannot be too corporate here. Much is inspirational. One has to pray a lot." And what has GK brought him? "Full satisfaction. I look forward to going to work every day." Who says he's retired?

There is so much more to be said about the GK volunteers, the richness of their experiences, their hopes, their realizations.

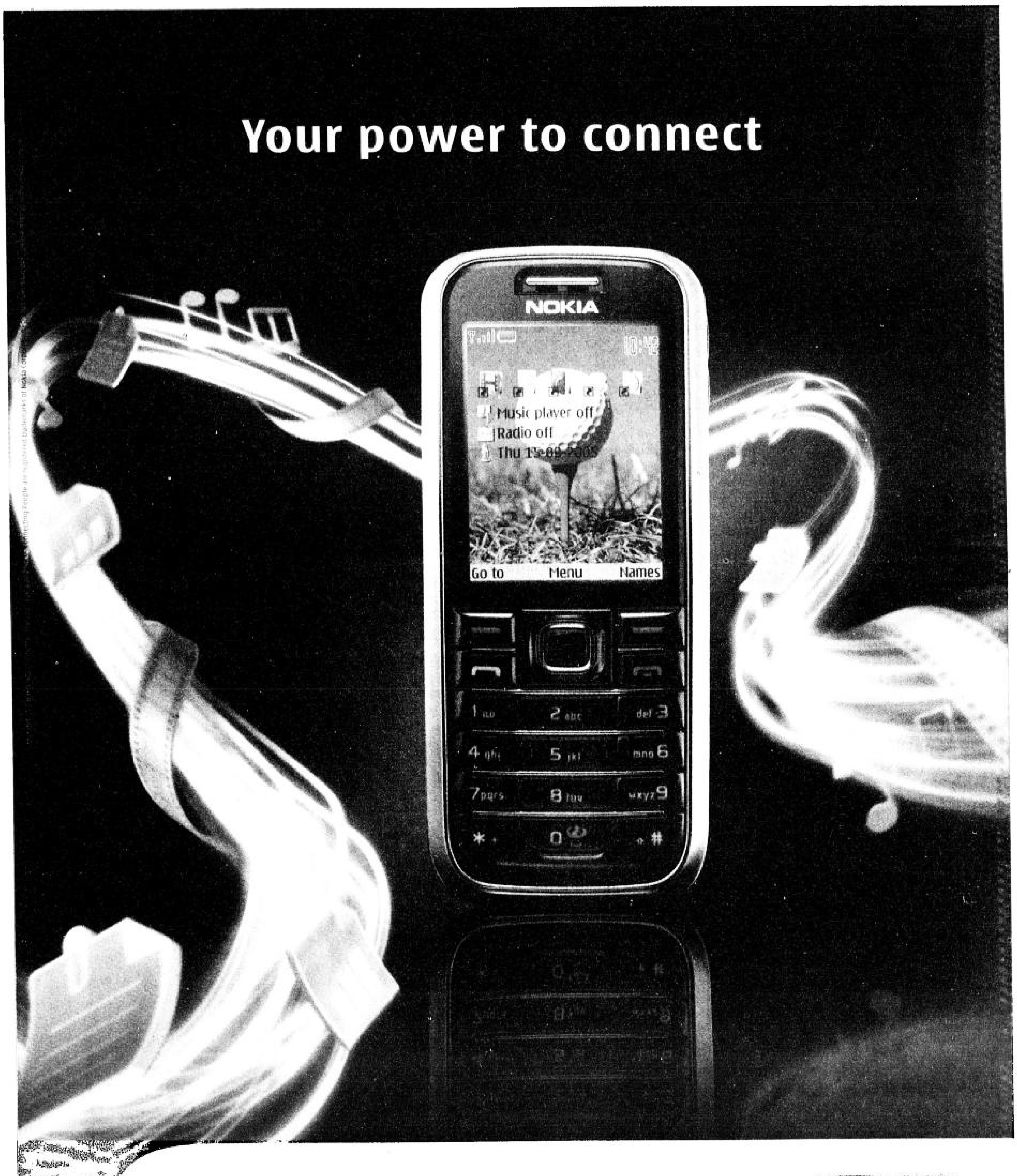
Someday volumes would be filled with their own stories and the stories about the people they have served, about that special time in their lives when they said, "This is the best time to be a Filipino."

For the GK volunteers who have come to offer the best of themselves during the best time of their lives, Tony has this to say: "The best for the least."



GIVING THEIR BEST. Joey Moreno, Eleanor Chichioco, Mike Goco, Eena Kanapi, Aurora Pijuan, Paolo Domondon and GK head Tony Meloto are just a few of Gawad Kalinga's growing number of volunteers.

CERES P. DOYO



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GMA execs snub probe of House allies

From page A1

The Supreme Court has declared the gag rule in EO 464 unconstitutional but Malacañang has maintained the tribunal's landmark ruling has set out procedures for appearing in legislative probes. In July, the Palace issued Memo 108.

Officials summoned to Senate investigations routinely invoked the memo in recent weeks but this was the first time it was used in the House—just a day after members of the commission formed by President Macapagal-Arroyo to look into extrajudicial killings were sworn in on Monday.

The commission headed by former Supreme Court Associate Justice Jose Melo announced later on Monday that first on its agenda would be the disappearance of University of the Philippines students Sherlyn Cadapan, 29, and Karen Empeño, 23, who were reportedly abducted by soldiers.

Butuan Bishop Juan de Dios Pueblos, a commission member, said since one of his four colleagues, Nelia Teodoro-Gonzalez, was a UP regent she could provide materials on the case.

Cadapan and Empeño, together with farmer Manuel Merino, were abducted in late June. Army chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino later said that the two students had joined the underground communist movement.

Pueblos also said Deputy Director General Avelino Razon Jr., head of the Philippine National Police Task Force Usig, had been invited by the commission to submit a list of extrajudicial killings involving activists and media people.

Witnesses

"I hope the real witnesses will come out and I hope that the truth will come out," said Pueblos.

During yesterday's four-hour hearing, the House committee started to piece together incidents that could possibly link state security forces to the killings of leftists, journalists and activists.

Among the witnesses were a 71-year-old mother whose son fell into her arms after two hooded gunmen shot him twice; a wife who was awakened by gunshots only to discover her husband lying lifeless beside her, and another woman who saw soldiers take away her mother and brother in the dead of night.

Maxima Punzal recounted how her son Leodegario, a painter, was killed on Sept. 13, 2005, while he was working on a streamer in their house in Norzagaray, Bulacan.

Punzal, who was watching TV, suddenly heard a gunshot. Seconds later, she saw her son with his head bowed.

"I approached him, held his head, but the two men shot him again in the back. I asked them, 'Why did you kill my son? He has done nothing wrong. He was just quietly working here? Why are you doing this to us?'" the mother said in Filipino.

Case archived

Justice Undersecretary Teresita Domingo told lawmakers that the case had not been brought before the Department of Justice. Checking her files, however, she later said it had been investigated already. "But the case was archived due to lack of witnesses," lamented Domingo.

The testimonies of Jocelyn Javier, of Barangay Sta. Clara, Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija, and Marilyn Abellera, a native of Barangay Parista, Lupao, also in Nueva Ecija, bore the same pattern of masked gunmen either killing, or abducting their loved ones.

They painted a picture of village people terrorized by the presence of military detachments which, in most cases, occupied the barangay halls, displacing daycare centers.

The harassment prior to the killing or abduction had chilling effect on them as soldiers would go the rounds in the guise of conducting a census, the witnesses claimed.

They said the soldiers did not present any search or arrest warrants.

Witness protection

Assistant Justice Secretaries Ricardo Paras and Domingo said the justice department would be willing to admit the witnesses into the Witness Protection Program if need be.

Rep. Salacnib Baterina urged the government to put up a special witness protection program for witnesses of extrajudicial killings under the National Bureau of Investigation "to ensure their full cooperation and expedite the resolution of the killings."

Baterina said that without definite protection for witnesses, the Melo Commission was bound to encounter the same problem Task Force Usig faced—noncooperation of the victims' families and witnesses.

Baterina said the fear of the victims' families against the government's existing Witness Protection Program was understandable because those who provided security under the program were all from the police and military, he said.

He said a special protection program for witnesses of killings would encourage them to come forward and provide information or evidence to the Melo Commission.

Day of the Disappeared

The leftist Bagong Alyansang Makabayan also announced yesterday that it would observe the International Day of the Disappeared with a prayer gathering at Plaza Miranda in Manila.

Organizers are preparing flowers for each of the 700 victims of political killings and 100 who have disappeared. The Inquirer counts 247 assassinations. ***With reports from Christian V. Esguerra, Norman Bordadora and Luige A. del Puerto***

Melo giving up 'sweet life' for 'last hurrah'

From page A1

siastic about accepting the task of possibly investigating even President Macapagal-Arroyo and top military leaders because he was living the "sweet life" following his retirement four years ago.

"I'm taking it easy," said Melo in a telephone interview with the Inquirer. "But it's a challenge to once more do something for the country. This could be my last hurrah."

In an interview over dzBB radio on Monday, Melo admitted that he was "a little reluctant" to take the post.

"This is a big problem. Let's see what I can contribute. I have nothing to aspire for in life. Let's see if we can help things out," he said when asked of his immediate reaction to the Palace offer for him to head the panel to investigate the killings.

Avid golf player

After retirement in 2002, Melo said he spent his days playing golf with friends at the Mimosa Golf and Country Club and the Riviera Sports and Country Club in Silang, Cavite.

Asked about his handicap, he replied: "Well, I made a mistake (in submitting my score). Once, I played two balls and submitted the better score—so my handicap became 21 to 23 when it should be 27."

Will his new job stop him from playing his favorite game, Melo answered: "Yes, but I will try to squeeze a play ... we cannot do without playing the game."

He said he shifted from tennis to golf in 1994.

Before being appointed to the high court in 1992, Melo was serving as acting presiding justice of the Court of Appeals.

40 years in gov't service

Of his 40 years of government service, 17 years were spent outside the judiciary.

Joining the government service in 1962, Melo started as an executive assistant in the Malacañang legal office during the administration of President Diosdado Macapagal, Ms Arroyo's father.

He joined the Office of the Solicitor General in 1971 and was named concurrent acting commissioner of the Professional Regulation Commission until 1975.

He was later appointed commissioner of the Civil Service Commission before being appointed to the Court of Appeals in 1979.

Melo also served as "confidential assistant" to the chairman of the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission.

He also served as an advisor of the Philippine National Bank.

A native of Pampanga, Melo took up law at the MLQ School of Law and immediately joined the law firm of the late Sen. Jose W. Diokno. In 1960, he obtained a master's of law degree with the highest grade of "meritissimus" from the University of Sto. Tomas.

Bro. Mike calls on GMA to show Cha-cha card

From page A1

charismatic group which boasts of more than 5 million members said he would be meeting with Ms Arroyo this week and "I will reach out to her."

Velarde said the effort of some groups engaged in collecting signatures as a first step toward changing the Charter was not a genuine people's initiative and was a "blatant violation" of the Constitution.

Groups leading the people's initiative campaign, such as the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines and the multisectoral Sigaw ng Bayan, have submitted boxes supposedly containing 9 million signatures to the Commission on Elections seeking approval of their petition for Charter change.

"She [Ms Arroyo] has not stated her position but her officials are the ones pushing this people's initiative," Velarde said in a phone interview.

He said that if the forces behind the initiative succeeded in getting the nod of the Comelec and the Supreme Court, the El Shaddai would mobilize its members to defeat the move in a plebiscite.

Velarde said he would take the lead in informing the people about the real purpose behind the initiative.

En masse

"We are praying now that they will not be able to ram this down but eventually we will go out en masse," he said.

"We will call for a series of prayer rallies if they go all the way to the Supreme Court," he said, referring to any move by the Cha-cha group to petition the tribunal to allow the initiative to push through.

The high court ruled in 1997 that there was no enabling law that would allow Charter amendments through a people's initiative.

Velarde said he was gathering reports from El Shaddai members who had been asked to sign the Sigaw petition without being informed about the proposed amendments.

4 reasons

He stressed he was for Charter change provided it was done the "proper way," such as through a constituent assembly.

He cited four reasons behind his opposition to the people's initiative.

First, the proposal seeks to cancel the 2007 elections and convene the present Congress as an interim parliament, he said.

"The interim parliament will set the date of the election. When, we do not know ... What is not good here is they will extend the terms of the incumbent officials which expire in 2007 without the benefit of a new mandate," Velarde said.

He said the proposal also aimed to put all powers in the hands of parliament, eliminating the presidency and the Senate, thus leaving no other political entity to serve as a check and balance.

A gov't initiative

"They will elect the prime minister who will have all the powers of government, so if the parliament goes awry there is nothing we, the people, can do about it," Velarde said.

Velarde said the petition also was not a genuinely popular initiative.

"It is a government initiative because it is the local officials and the DILG (Department of Interior and Local Government) who are behind the signature campaign," he said.

Velarde said the people's initiative was a "circumvention" of some of the other modes of changing the Charter, such as through a constituent assembly, in order to go around the opposition of the Senate.

He said the petition was also illegal because of the existing Supreme Court injunction against such an initiative.

"Government officials blatantly violating our laws is not good for our country and people," Velarde said.

He said he favored a constituent assembly because the senators and congressmen were in the best position to deliberate on Charter amendments.

Velarde proposed that the 2007 elections be held as scheduled, adding it could also serve as a referendum on the Arroyo administration, which is hounded by questions of legitimacy.

'Signatures made in heaven'

By TJ Burgonio

EVER HEARD OF THE DEAD rising from their graves or coming down from heaven to sign a petition to amend the Constitution through a people's initiative?

It happened in Makati City, if you take Mayor Jejomar Binay's word for it.

The signatures of at least four dead people and of a detained suspect in the murder of an ambassador were in the petition filed with the Commission on Elections to change the Charter through a people's initiative, Binay said yesterday.

Appearing at a Senate hearing on proposed enabling laws for a people's initiative, Binay identified the "dead" signatories and, with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, showed pictures of their tombstones.

These were Severino Victorino Sr., Olivo Rodriguez, Evelyn Nave and Dominador Tabirao, who died on different dates between 2003 and 2005, he said.

"Severino Victorino Sr. born Nov. 8, 1930, died Dec. 24, 2005 ... but made to sign from heaven," the mayor said, eliciting laughter from the spectators, as he read the details on Victorino's tombstone.

Binay also said the signature of Roberto Lumagui, who is in prison for the murder of Ambassador Alicia Ramos in April last year, also appeared in the petition filed by the Sigaw ng Bayan.

"He was made to sign while in prison," he said, drawing more chuckles from the audience.

As evidence, they submitted affidavits of the relatives of the signatories, death certificates and pictures of the tombstones.

Binay testified that Sigaw gathered thousands of fraudulent signatures in districts I and II of Makati to support its petition.

Binay also presented slides of Jade Valley restaurant in Quezon City, where Sigaw spokesperson Raul Lambino allegedly met with local officials of Makati and drew up a more credible strategy for gathering signatures.

The strategy supposedly entailed tapping eight kagawads and eight coordinators to solicit not less than 20,000 signatures, paying off each signatory with P500, and requiring residents to sign the petition in the presence of the coordinators.

Tanker captain admits work papers expired

From page A1

of the Solar I since 2001, and that he had experience working aboard other tankers, a Japanese chemical tanker and an LPG tanker.

At the Department of Justice, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said those responsible for the massive oil spill in Guimaras Strait could be held liable for reckless imprudence.

"They could be liable for charges of reckless imprudence resulting in damage to property, damage to nature or maybe death because there is somebody who died as a result of this," he said.

Gonzalez, who was tasked with determining the criminal liability of those involved, formed yesterday a five-member fact finding committee to investigate the oil spill "without fear or favor."

He said the committee would invite the owner and ship captain of the Solar I, executives of Petron Corp., officials of the Maritime Industry Authority and the Philippine Coast Guard, and members of SBMI "to determine criminal liability."

At the SBMI hearing, Aguro defended his decision to continue with the voyage to Zamboanga del Sur after taking shelter at the Iloilo anchorage area near Guimaras, only to have the vessel tilt when it ran into rough seas.

He said he believed the tanker could withstand the weather when it left the anchorage area, where it had taken shelter to remove the water that had collected on one of its decks and in its compartments.

"If I thought it was not sufficient I would not have set sail," Aguro said, adding that there was no typhoon warning from the weather bureau.

Violation of safety code

Aguro said he agreed with the SBMI observation that his decision to seek shelter near Guimaras, which was not part of the contingency plan, was a violation of the safety code.

He also admitted to violating the regulations of Petron in Bataan when he brought the tanker there without a tugboat, and to taking the western portion of Panay to reach Zamboanga instead of what SBMI head Rear Admiral Danilo Abinoja said was the "safer" eastern route.

Aguro said he would have taken a longer route if he went through the eastern portion of Panay and would have generated more expenses. But Abinoja said the eastern route was safer for the tanker and its cargo.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered the Philippine Coast Guard to identify immediately sea lanes where oil tankers can pass to prevent a repeat of the Solar I oil spill.

It is very likely that oil tankers will be prohibited from passing the Visayan Sea, according to Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano.

Aguro testified that on the way from Bataan to Zamboanga, the Solar I encountered bad weather due to the southwest monsoon off Antique. He said he noticed that the vessel was pitching forward and decided to seek shelter at the Iloilo anchorage, but did not drop anchor because the vessel would not be staying long.

After seeking shelter, he learned that the forecastle deck, which is in the front of the tanker, was taking in water.

He said there was water in the forepeak tank, in the chain locker room and the bosun's store. The crew learned that an air vent was damaged and repaired it with a plug. They also used a submersible pump to remove the water.

The tanker left Iloilo anchorage with the weather starting to become rough. When the tanker passed Guimaras Island on the afternoon of Aug. 11, it began listing to the right.

Oil leaking before vessel sank

Aguro said he tried to head back to Guimaras or Bacolod to seek shelter, but the sea was rough. He said the tanker listed to its side before turning over and sinking. He also said that he saw oil leaking from the ship before it sank.

Abinoja questioned Aguro's decision to continue on to Zamboanga given the condition of the vessel.

"I'm not saying he's in error. We're just questioning his judgment because there were other options he could have taken," Abinoja told reporters.

He said that because Aguro had testified to not being pressured to leave for Zamboanga del Sur at once, the captain could have waited another day so that he could find out what was causing the water to come into the ship.

Aguro could also have waited out the weather because the captain had said in his affidavit that the wind was blowing hard when he left the Iloilo anchorage area, Abinoja said.

Abinoja also said the captain could have checked first whether the electric windlass controlling the anchor was working before setting off for Zambaoanga.

Aguro did not use the electric windlass while in Iloilo because the motor room was flooded, but he said the windlass was working when the tanker left Bataan on Aug. 9.

Life jackets

Asked about the lack of life jackets aboard the tanker, the captain said that when the crew members jumped overboard, he saw that all had life jackets. But only 18 of the 20 crew members made it aboard the life raft that eventually brought them to the shore of Guimaras.

Two others, Victor Morados and Art Ian Nabua, remain missing.

Aguro said the life raft overturned when they were near the shore of Guimaras, causing them to lose the logbook that they had rescued from the vessel.

The SBMI earlier found that there were only 19 life jackets aboard the vessel, one short for the 20 people on board.

As for the tanker's reported overloading, Aguro said two surveyors from Petron had boarded the vessel. He said this was standard practice.

The SBMI has found that the tanker was only supposed to carry 16 people but was carrying 20 people when it left the refinery of Petron in Limay, Bataan for Zamboanga del Sur.

Committee members

At the DOJ, Gonzalez said the committee would determine, among others, the seaworthiness of the vessel, the direction of the ship before it sank, and whether the license of the captain was valid.

Among the members of the committee are Justice Undersecretaries Ernesto Pineda, Macabangkit Lanto and Fidel Exconde Jr.; Assistant Chief State Prosecutor Richard Anthony Fadullon and Alejandro Tenerife, National Bureau of Investigation acting assistant director.

Eduardo Hernandez, former president of the Philippine Bar Association and an expert on maritime and shipping laws, has been appointed consultant of the task force.

Gonzalez has given the investigating team 30 days to submit its report and recommendations. ***With a report from Christine O. Avendaño***

It's Arroyos vs Cayetanos

SEN. PIA CAYETANO HAS JOINED the fray between the Arroyo brothers and her younger brother, House Deputy Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano.

This after Negros Occidental Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo joined his brother, First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, in a "tag team" against Alan Peter after the latter had accused Mike of having a secret multimillion-dollar bank account in Germany.

Iggy told Alan Peter "to have the common sense to check your facts first and not make liars out of us congressmen like you," after the HypoVereinsbank in Munich issued a certification saying there was no such account in Mike's name.

Alan Peter had turned down the First Gentleman's invitation to accompany him to Germany to look into the existence of the account. Instead, he demanded that the First Gentleman, President Macapagal-Arroyo, their son Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo and Iggy Arroyo sign a waiver allowing the political opposition to look into their local and foreign bank accounts.

Yesterday, Pia said she was not worried for her brother because she knew him not to make accusations without basis.

"I know my brother to be very responsible, to do his homework. I've always trusted that he knows what he's doing," she said.

Roadmap to 2030 launched

By Daxim L. Lucas

A MULTISECTORAL GROUP YESTERDAY launched the "Philippines 2030 Roadmap" which aims to accelerate the country's progress toward nationhood.

The group called Mahal Ko ang Pilipinas is headed by former Finance Secretary Jesus P. Estanislao.

The anchor stakeholders, made up of 21 city governments and a coalition of sectors at both the local and national levels, said their goal was to achieve the "Philippine dream of true nationhood" in one generation or 25 years.

"Nine sectors, thinking together and building bridges ... in greater solidarity with each other, will promote the common cause of our nation," said Estanislao, who is also the founding fellow and chairman of the Institute for Solidarity in Asia (ISA).

The initiative will gather leaders of key sectors in society, namely the youth, academe, business, media, civic and professional organizations, the labor sector, the Church and the military.

Together with officials of local government units, the movement will map out 20- to 25-year plans of comprehensive development for the country and their respective sectors and cities.

The flagship program of the Philippines 2030 Roadmap is "Dream Cities," a project which identifies local government units at the city level whose mayors are committed to implementing the development plan.

Dream Cities are "places where citizens live in prosperity, in an environment where governance is a shared responsibility between the people and their leaders," according to the group's press statement.

The ISA, which advocates good governance among public entities, uses the Public Governance System (PGS)—a version of the Harvard University-developed "balanced scorecard" used for evaluating corporations—for selecting Dream Cities.

ISA believes the PGS not only enables constituents to participate in public governance, but also ensures that programs can be continued regardless of who holds the mayoralty seat.

Palace asks GMA foes for civility while she's away

MALACAÑANG IS APpealing to the opposition for some civility by sticking to "constructive criticisms" especially when President Macapagal-Arroyo embarks on a 12-day, six-country tour next month.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said that with the impeachment case foiled at the House of Representatives for the second time in one year and the economy posting rosy figures, it was about time the opposition change its tactics and tone down its antigovernment rhetoric to more constructive criticisms.

Based on the tentative schedule of the President's foreign trip next month, the President's first stop is Helsinki, Finland for the 6th Asia-Europe meeting. The President will then proceed to Brussels, Belgium to sit down with European Union leaders and then to London, United Kingdom for a forum with British investors.

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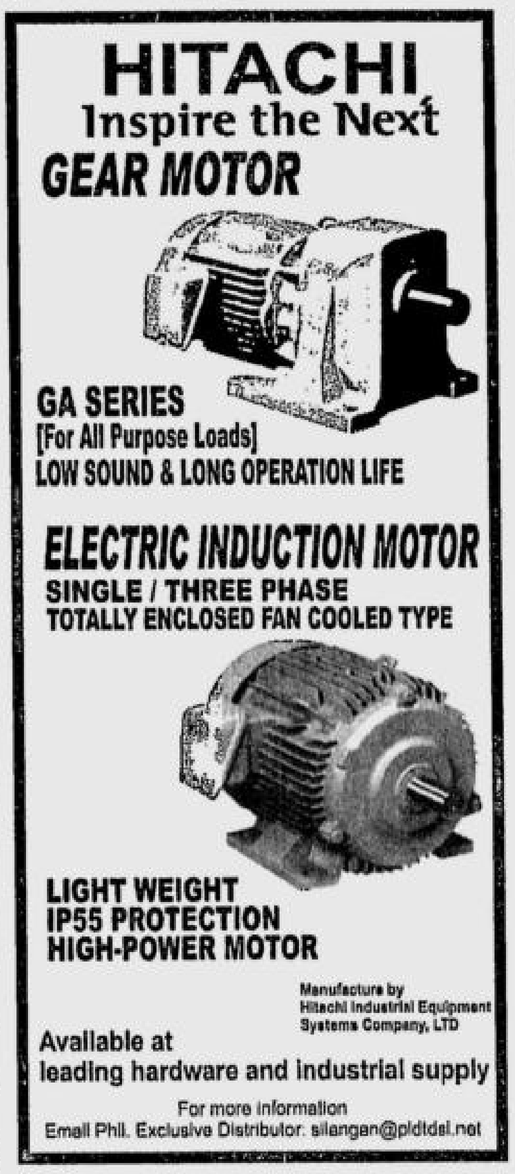
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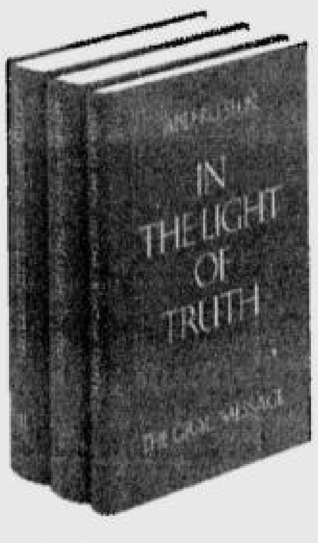
In the Light of Truth

The Grail Message by Ad-ru-shin



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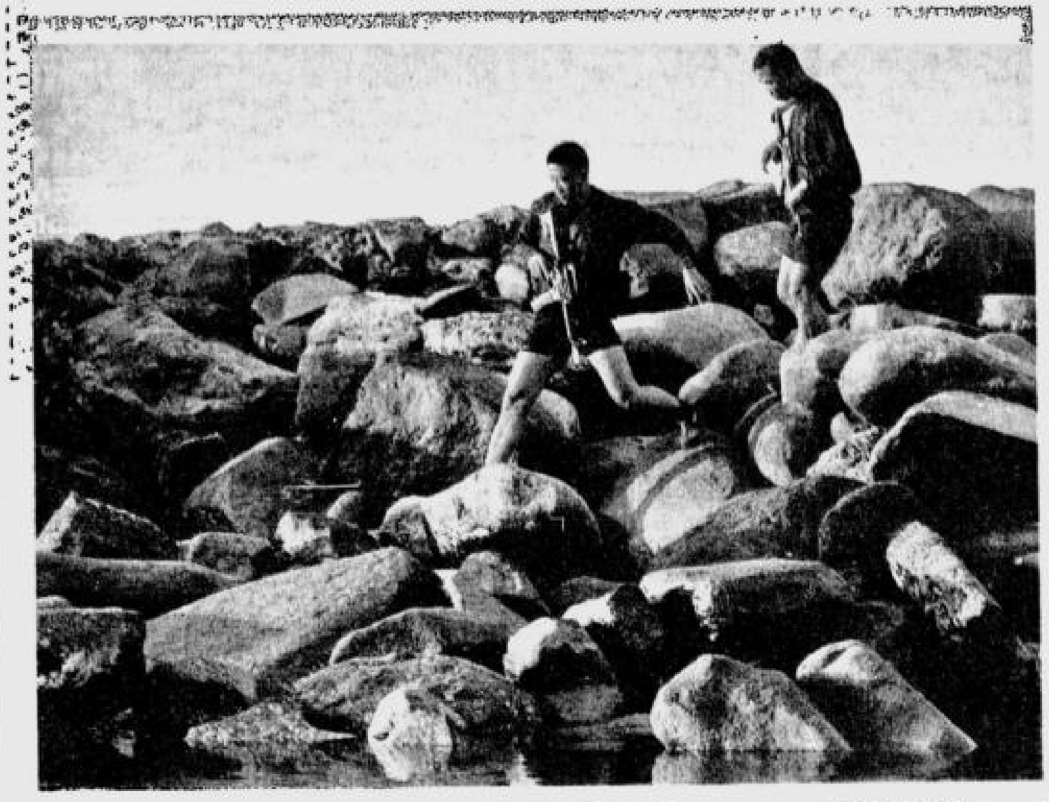
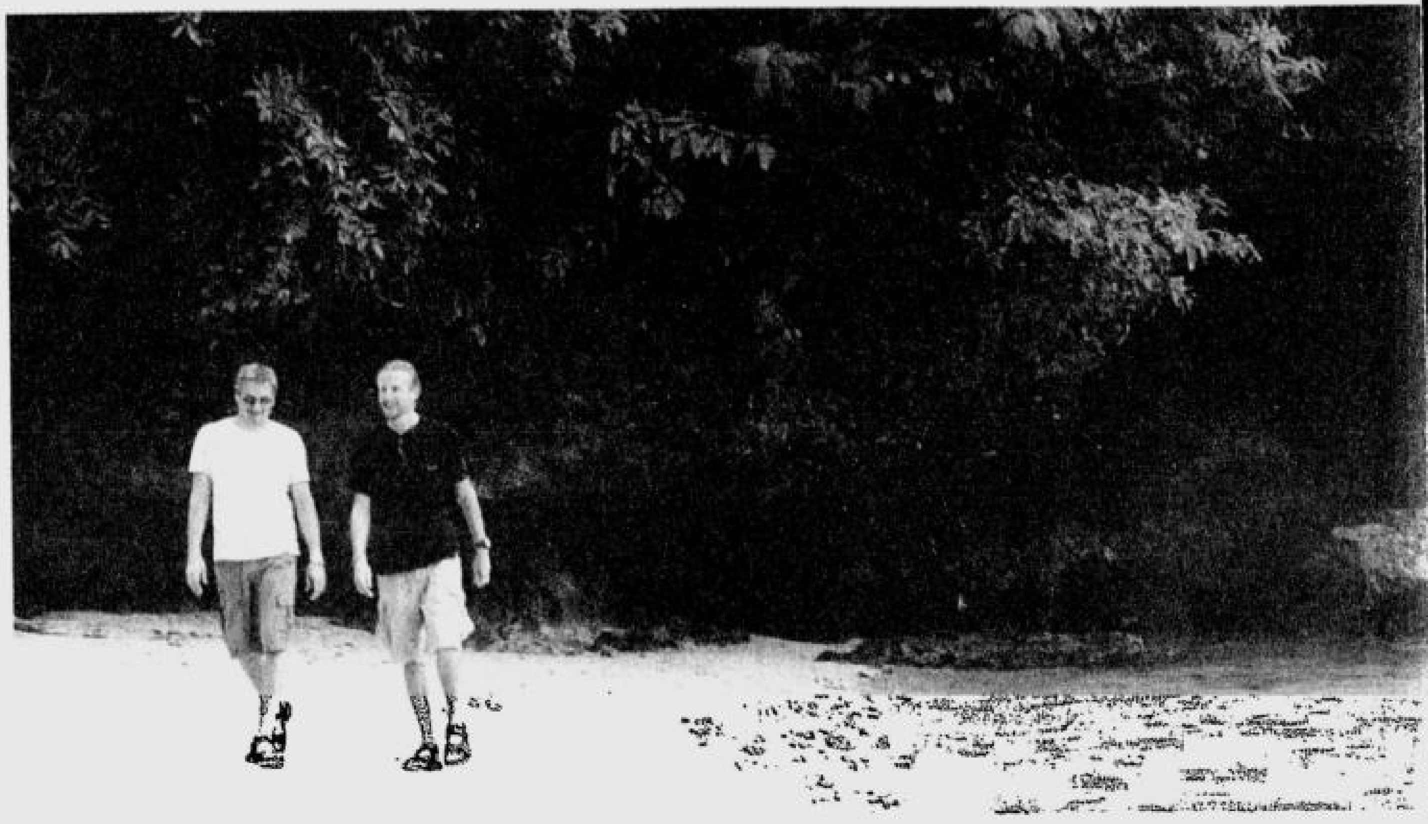


DARK SHORES. Man sprays Plantex, an organic liquid solution on sea water contaminated with bunker oil in Barangay Tanod, Nueva Valencia, Guimaras. EDWIN BACASMAS

SLICK AND SLIDE. Armed members of the Presidential Security Group Special Reaction Unit hop on the oil-covered breakwater near the Costa Aguada resort on Inampulugan Island, Guimaras. LYN RILLON

AN ISLANDER cleans up the shore in front of a beach resort in Sitio Alubihod, Barangay Poblacion, Nueva Valencia. ARNOLD ALMACEN/VISAYAS



BRITISH nationals David Grey and Callum Squires stroll along the shores of Alubihod Beach in Barangay Poblacion, Nueva Valencia, Guimaras. The men said they thought this was a good stopover before moving on to other islands. They heard of the oil spill belatedly from media. LYN RILLON

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Guimaras folk evacuated from worst-hit areas

From page A1

by the Department of Health.

Gonzaga said tests conducted in the areas showed high levels of pollution coming from the oil slick after the MT Solar I, a tanker carrying 2 million liters of bunker fuel oil, sank southwest of the island-province on Aug. 11.

The evacuation began a day after President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the creation of a task group of scientists and government experts to conduct and assess the safety of the air, soil and water in the areas affected by the oil spill.

The President also directed the Philippine Coast Guard to identify immediately sea lanes where oil tankers could pass to prevent a repeat of the environmental tragedy.

Gonzaga said 100 families or around 300 persons were being evacuated from Sitio Banasan in Barangay Cabalagnan, and 34 families or around 100 persons from Sitio Lusaran in Barangay La Paz, both in Nueva Valencia.

The two villages are the worst-hit among the 26 communities in three towns affected by the spill.

Evacuees who do not have relatives to stay with in safe areas will be temporarily housed at the La Paz Elementary School, the Cabalagnan Central School, barangay hall and day care center. The mayor said the provincial and municipal governments would provide them rice, canned goods and noodles.

Testing activities

On Monday, Ms Arroyo convened the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) at the Costa Aguada resort on nearby Inampulugan Island and instructed the new task group to complete in one week its water sampling and analysis, including the inspection of fish and other marine life, in the affected villages.

Ms Arroyo said in a media pool interview after the NDCC meeting that the tests would be conducted in 54 coastal barangays in Guimaras. So far, she said, experts have tested 14 barangays where the oil slick was visible and found two of them badly affected.

Nine others were cleared, but Ms Arroyo said a second testing would be done.

Marine and fish resources in fish cages and fish pens worth P57 million have so far been destroyed, according to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

Toxicity

The task group includes the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, BFAR, Department of Health, Bureau of Soils, University of the Philippines Visayas, Silliman University and the Southeast Asian Fisheries and Development Center.

Ms Arroyo's adviser for Western Visayas, Rafael Coscolluela, said the affected villages would be tested for toxi substances, especially hydrogen sulfide. Those found to be clear of toxi materials will be given a "clean bill o health" to assure residents, visitors an tourists that not all of Guimaras' ha been contaminated, he said.

The group will submit recommendations for areas found to have a high level of pollution, including the evacuation of residents or setting quarantin conditions.

Aside from utilizing the laboratorie of the government agencies, the grou could hasten their work on a researc vessel to be sent by the BFAR whic serve as a "floating laboratory," Coscolluela added.

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano, who attended the meeting, cite the need to certify the areas to be tested and declare those free from the oi slick and its toxins. Satellite images o the spill, he noted, were not accurate a they could not distinguish an oil spill sheen or merely a reflection in the areas.

Oil debris

It was also agreed in the NDC meeting that Petron Corp., which hire the Solar I to transport the bunker fue oil from Bataan to Zamboanga, woul transfer oil-contaminated debris fron the shoreline to barges. The debris wi be delivered to the cement compan Holcim Philippines for fuel use.

The chief of the military's Centra Command (Centcom), Maj. Gen. Cardozo Luna, yesterday deployed soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division base in Jamindan, Capiz, to Nueva Valenci to help in the evacuation of villagers.

Some of the troops will stay in th villagers to guard against looters.

In Manila, Archbishop Gaudenci Cardinal Rosales has mobilized parishes and lay organizations to help th people of Guimaras who have lost thei livelihood and pristine environmen due to the oil spill

Rosales, a known environmentalis wants the 92 parishes and around 92 pastoral councils under the Archdiocese of Manila to gather their resource and channel them to the parishes in th island-province.

His instruction came in the heels o five-day retreat undergone by som 100 priests from the archdiocese in lat July in an attempt to raise their environmental consciousness.

Instead of the usual mortificatio and reflections, the retreat tackled th most pressing environmental issues the theology behind the environmenta movement, the Catholic social doctrin and other matters. *With reports from Jhunnex Napallacan and Carla P Gomez, INQUIRER Visayas; and Blanche S. Rivera in Manila*

'Chicken feathers smell bad'

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—USING HAIR and chicken feathers in the oil spill booms may not be such a good idea.

"Chicken feathers smell bad. We need to reduce the smell … otherwise we'll just add to the bunker fuel oil fumes," said Melvin Purzuelo of the Save Our Seas Movement.

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By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

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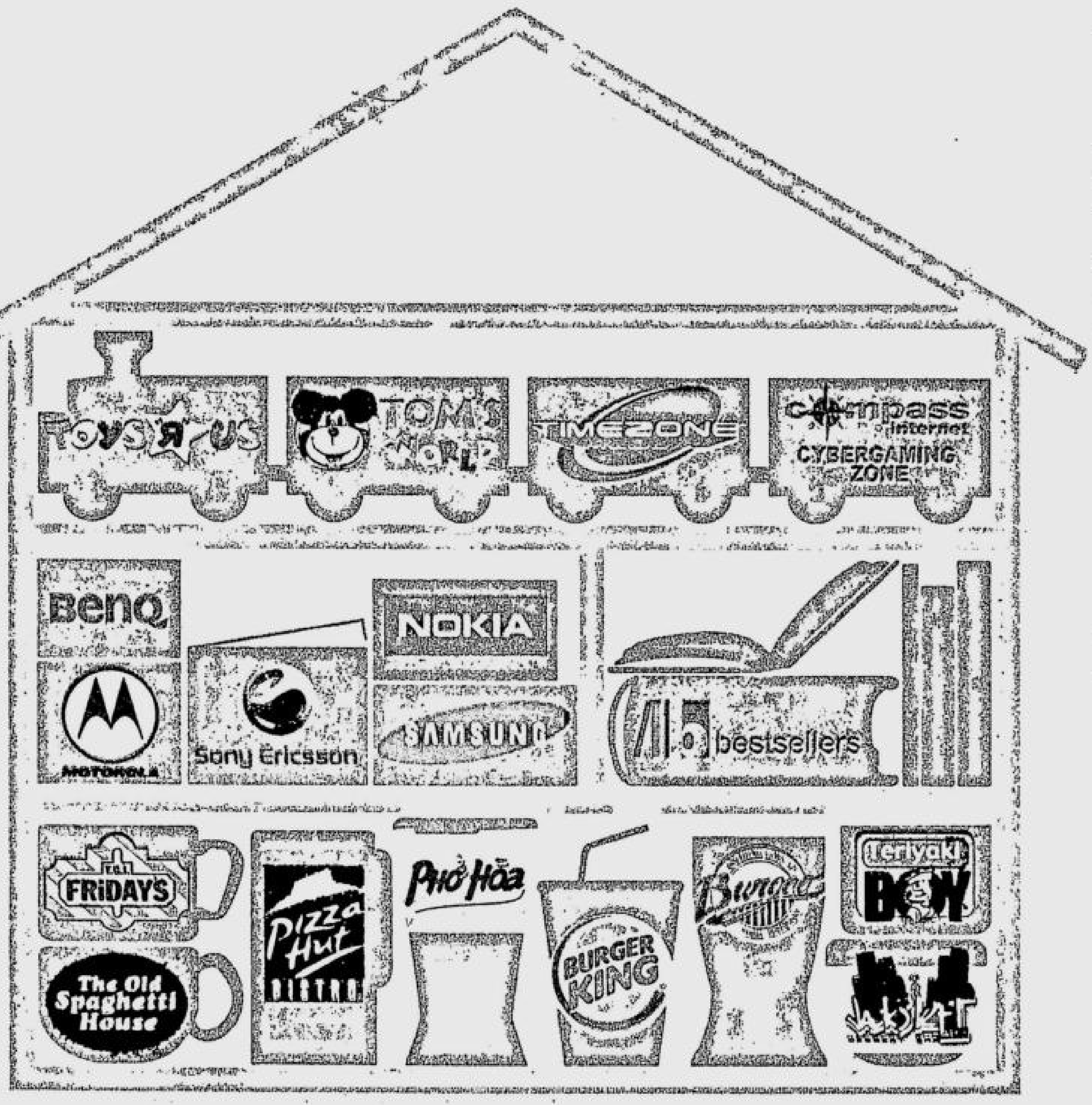

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'Chicken feathers smell bad'

By Carla P. Gomez
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EDITORIAL

WE'VE HEARD IT ALL BEFORE. OMBUDSMAN Merceditas Guiterrez once vowed she would follow corruption trails even if they led to Malacañang. But nothing happened. Now retired Supreme Court Justice Jose Melo says there will be no sacred cows—even as the commission he heads contains some pretty questionable livestock in its roster of members, like the director of the National Bureau of Investigation and the chief government prosecutor. While every member of the Melo Commission is presumed to be interested in discovering facts surrounding the epidemic of political murders afflicting the country, the presence of government officials in the commission raises a troubling question. And the question is, can a commission that includes the NBI and state prosecutors really ask tough questions, and get honest answers?

At the heart of the commission's mandate is whether or not the state—whether its civilian or military arm—are involved in extrajudicial killings, and possibly involved in a conspiracy. The commission will have to inquire into not only the circumstances surrounding such killings, but also the official reaction to them, or the lack of any meaningful action to find the murderers and stop the killings. This suggests that even this early, the commission is going to find its work hobbled by a justifiable skepticism on the part of the public, particularly the ranks of activists and their families decimated by the murders.

Since President Ferdinand Marcos appointed Chief Justice Enrique Fernando to probe the assassination of former Sen. Benigno Aquino, presidents who set up fact-finding commissions have faced an uphill battle to obtain credibility for such efforts. Considering how President Macapagal-Arroyo was markedly slow in expressing outrage over the mounting cases of extrajudicial executions, and how she praised Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, doubts over both her sincerity and the effectiveness of any probe body she creates will not go away.

Not least because a commission infiltrated by officials with an arguably vested interest in muting its findings has shot itself in the foot before it can even begin its work. Add to this the news that Palparan has announced that Central Luzon is 95 percent free of dissidents, and the public has to wonder if this isn't merely a public relations exercise.

The President can go to Finland later this year, and perhaps say there's an investigation and, if Palparan is to be believed, then there may actually be fewer killings. But that could mean that those who were meant to be killed are already dead. Which recalls the words of the Roman historian Tacitus: "They created a wasteland and called it peace."

As we have pointed out before, the Melo Commission faces another handicap. It lacks any real power to compel the production of evidence or the gathering of testimony. The Senate, for example, can issue subpoenas and has the power to compel witnesses to appear and testify, but the executive branch has proved time and again that even those powers can be defied. If the Senate finds itself blocked at virtually every turn by unprecedented stonewalling and hostility on the part of civilian and military functionaries, will a commission tasked with looking into the culpability of similar officials fare any better?

Still, the public is, by instinct, reasonable. Certainly, it is prepared to give the Melo Commission the benefit of the doubt, like the Agrava and Davide commissions in their time. In the end, it is the commission's report that will bear scrutiny, though it is devoutly to be wished that their eventual findings won't end up being filed away somewhere beyond the reach of the public like the Mayuga report.

Perhaps the NBI director and state prosecutor in the committee will, for the greater good, rethink their membership in the commission. The fact-finding body should not be crippled before it even begins its work. It must discover the facts, and then issue recommendations. Without fear, or favor, or consideration for who, inside and outside the government, may be implicated. As the President herself has said in the past, "Let the chips fall where they may."

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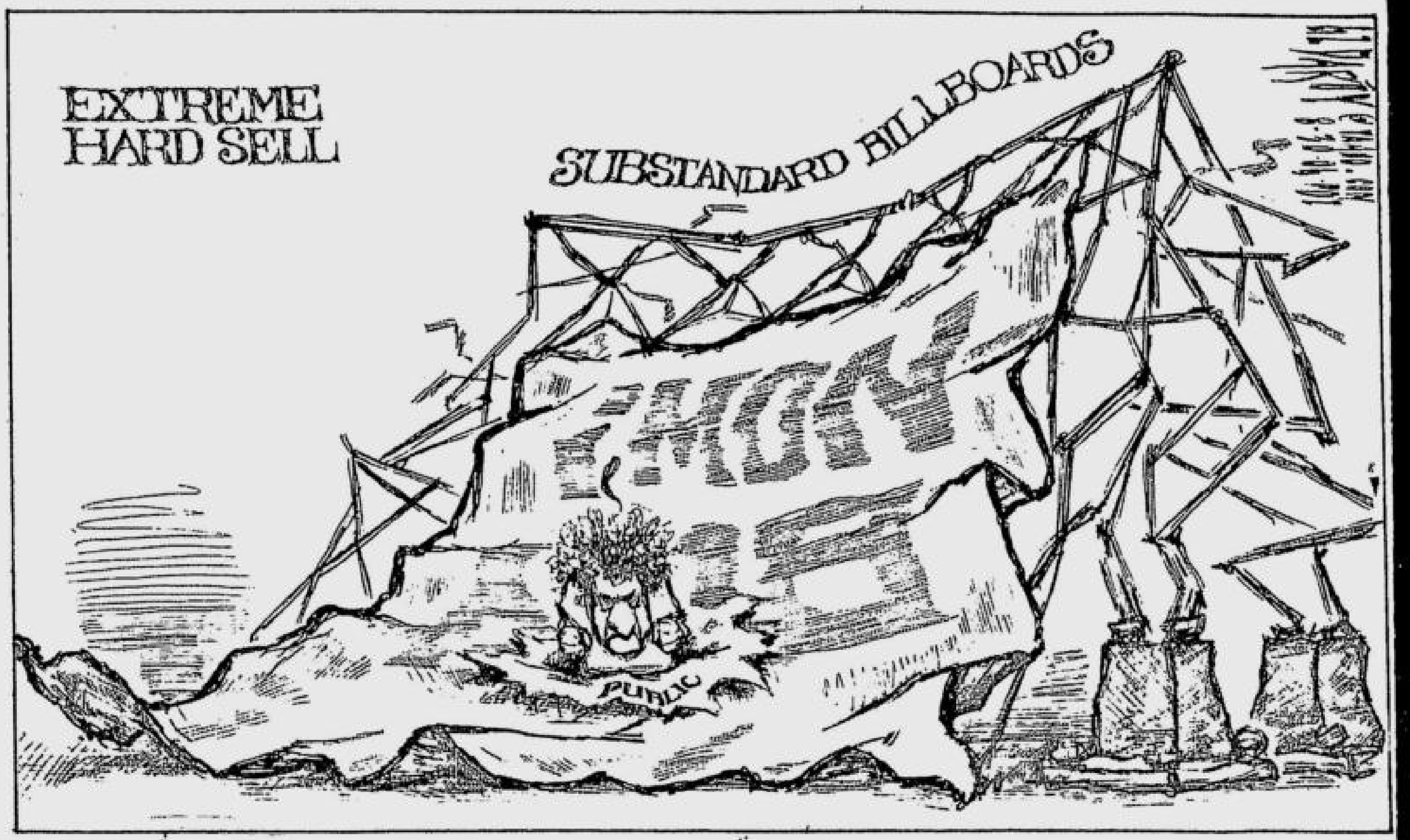

Petron should be more forthright

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

EVERY BIG CORPORATION HAS A LEGAL DEpartment and a public relations department. When trouble erupts, management's first impulse is to consult the legal eagles whose reflex action is to use every technicality to wiggle out of a difficult situation. Only later, when its relations with the public deteriorates does management consult the PR people.

That's what happened to Petron when a tanker carrying 2 million liters of its bunker oil sank in the sea off Guimaras, leaving an oil slick that is still polluting the sea and coastal areas. True to their calling, the lawyers stuck to technicality: the oil spill is the responsibility of the tanker's owner, Sunshine Maritime Co., which is insured; Petron itself is not legally liable. Wrong.

Probably awakened by the seriousness of the situation and the resulting public outcry, Petron is now singing a different tune. Its chair, Nicasio Alcantara, told the joint congressional hearing investigating the tragedy last Monday that Petron has "taken responsibility in addressing the containment and recovery of the oil spill both on land and sea, and ... [will] map out the long-term rehabilitation of the island of Guimaras."

And well it should. As Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said, after being ordered by the President to find out who is responsible for the oil spill, Petron is responsible. It owns the cargo and it was the one who chose the decrepit single-hulled tanker to carry its oil to Mindanao. Sunshine Maritime is also responsible; it owns and operates the tanker that sank. And the Philippine Coast Guard and Marina are also responsible. Why did they allow the tanker to leave port despite the bad weather, its dangerous cargo and the expired license of the ship's captain?

Petron, however, is still using technicality to wiggle out of legal obligations that will surely ensue. "Technically, the vessel owner is liable for the oil spill damage," Petron said in its briefing paper. "However, Petron will extend all the assistance needed to the province of Guimaras. We are committed to stay and help in the province as long as necessary."

At the hearing, Alcantara ticked off what Petron has done and is still doing at the site of the oil spill. It has hired families affected by the spill, at P200 a day, to clean up the coastline; it has deployed substantial equipment and tugboats to combat the oil spill; a vessel owned by a Japanese salvage company hired by Petron was supposed to have arrived yesterday to search the seabed for the sunken Solar I tanker; a 24-hour medical assistance center has been set up with the help of the Department of Health; Petron has hired the services of environmental experts from UP Visayas and Silliman University to develop a long-term rehabilitation plan for the mangrove, marine and fishery resources; it will now use double-hull and double-bottom tankers for its oil cargo; it is distributing relief food packets weekly to the affected families, etc., etc.

But Petron did not explain why, despite the Semirara oil spill only a few months ago, it still continued to hire single-hulled tankers when double-hulled vessels are readily available. Or why it took so long for the company to respond to the emergency and to inform the public.

Petron now needs a massive public relations effort to repair its damaged image. In fact, there already is a clamor to "boycott" Petron products. The public is that enraged. High-ranking Petron officials should be seen more in public explaining what they are doing to save the environment. But they still seem to be shy and are dodging public appearances, a sure sign of guilt.

After agreeing to present its case at the Kapihan sa Manila forum last Monday, Petron officials begged off at the last minute. They had to attend the congressional hearing *daw*. But such hearings don't start until 12 noon whereas the *kapihan* lasts only an hour, from 9 to 10 a.m. Then they said they had to prepare for the hearing. Finally, they said President Macapagal-Arroyo was going again to Guimaras and Petron officials had to accompany her there.

Petron has thousands of officials and employees. Surely, at least one of them can speak for the corporation. But maybe this multibillion-peso corporation still adheres to the policy of "no talk, no mistake." It is content with distributing press releases and making its PR department work its butt off and still expects to get a good press.

Petron management prefers to make *sipsip* with GMA rather than inform the public face to face about what it is doing to contain the worst oil spill in the Philippines.

***

Already outraged by the oil spill, the public is doubly outraged by the brazenness and cold-bloodedness of the mercenaries behind the Cha-cha railroad. Those people are not stupid. They know the legal obstacles to Cha-cha are formidable but they keep on because while the movement is alive, there is plenty of money for them.

And what is this double-talk from the Commission on Elections? Chair Benjamin Abalos said correctly that they would go by the Supreme Court decision barring the Comelec from "acting on any petition for a people's initiative" to amend the Constitution in the absence of an enabling law. But in the next breath, he said that the Comelec would accept the filing of the petition, endorse it to the law department for verification and then send it to the Comelec en banc.

If the Comelec is to obey the Supreme Court decision, it should not even entertain any such petition. The Comelec should throw it outright into the wastebasket.

Out of the box

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

THE FUTURE HAS A WAY OF CREEPING UP fast. A few years ago, I was telling people I had read somewhere that "techies" were predicting that we would soon be having DVDs that could contain as much as five movies. The reason for that being that the industry was experimenting with making discs with bigger capacities. I myself didn't think that would happen so soon—not commercially anyway. I figured that even if they could produce discs that could hold that many movies, they would be very expensive.

I couldn't have been more wrong.

If you've been to your favorite pirates' lair recently, you'll know what I'm talking about. Your friendly neighborhood Moro trader is now selling a special kind of DVD that contains multiple movies or the entire seasons of TV series. The disc in fact contains not just five movies but all of eight movies. It's expressly marked "8 in 1." The same disc can contain the whole season of your favorite TV show. The entire "CSI" series is in five discs I think. The discs go for P60 to P100 per depending on which part of Metro Manila you buy them.

The quality isn't bad. Any compression, of course, degrades video quality, but the Chinese (from whom these things apparently come) seem to have found a way of compressing the contents at this intensity without reducing it to the kind of junk we had during the first days of the Betamax. Remember that dodo? The quality is not unlike a rented VHS, one that went from hand to hand, or eye to eye, before it got to you. Not bad if you're not finicky about video quality, bad if you invested in a plasma TV.

More awesomely, the Chinese seem to have gone where their Western counterparts feared to tread. They are now mass-producing dual-layer DVD, or DVD 9, and selling it at single-layer, or DVD 5, prices. (The cheapest blank dual layer DVD, as far as I know, costs around P250 to P300 locally.) I didn't believe it at first when I saw the discs advertised as DVD 9. But I scanned it in my PC, and, lo and behold, the thing was truly, certifiably, genuinely a dual-layer, 9-gig DVD. No wonder it could hold that much data, albeit in compressed form.

We can look at this development in two ways:

One is through the same blinders of the IPC, seeing it as an exponential leap in piracy, a bigger threat that needs an equally bigger response to stop. That is how government, with no small prodding from the United States, has always looked at it, responding with the Videogram Regulatory Board, the Optical Board and whatever other boards it has gone overboard to create.

At the very least, it's useless. Take it from the Borg (if you are a New Generation "Star Trek" fan): Resistance is futile. Might as well bid the waves hold still. With the way digital technology, like the nuclear one in the past, blasting out in all directions, the possibility of government stopping "piracy" (that word deserves whole new forums by itself) is about as bright as the "old pirates," or sellers of single-layer one-disc-one-movie, stopping the invasion of the double-layer "8-in-1s."

But it isn't just that it's futile, it's also that it's unenlightened. There is another way to look at the development, and that is to view its enormous potential. We are in fact merely seeing the tip of the iceberg. Thinking out of the box, what this means is not that we will soon have more movies or TV shows than we can hope to watch in our lifetime, what it means is that we will soon have more information than we will know what to do with. The rapid strides in technology have now given us more access to information than we had always thought possible. Think of the possibilities of that for education.

Not every Filipino has a PC (though I still think government and the private sector should aim to get one to as many kids as possible, or we will widen the information gap between us and other countries), but most every Filipino has a TV. And given that DVD players particularly from (where else?) China are now going for a song, probably a DVD player as well.

Now, what if we made the "8-in-1s" offer not just entertainment, not just movies and TV shows, but educational material as well? What if the BBC's "History of World War II" (a fantastic documentary, which used to be 25 discs but which can now be compressed in 4 or 5 discs) were suddenly available to students? What if "Sesame Street," which was where some people I know swear they learned their English from, complete with the accent, were there too from as far back as when it started? What if "Batibot," "Kasaysayan," "Peta Presents," "CCP Presents," "Sic O'Clock News," and all the other educational local shows the networks trashed because they couldn't compete with their more commercial fare were recycled in this form?

I know those things would have problems competing with the movie and TV fare offerings of Quiapo and elsewhere, but what if public schools gave them away free to students the way they used to give away free powdered milk and vaccination shots? Educational TV you can't always watch because you have to adjust to its time (and because of competing fare), but DVDs you can always watch at your leisure. Who knows, maybe the parents of the kids who are required to watch "Batibot" and "Kasaysayan" as part of their assignment can pick up a thing or two from it, too.

The technology certainly makes it possible. I would earnestly suggest that the money that funds the anti-piracy agencies—which is taxpayers' money being used to protect multinational interests—be used for this instead. Or generally to projects that rethink how best to educate this desperate country.

The question may not be how to bring the kids to the classroom. The question may well be how to bring the classroom to the kids.

Magsaysay—the giant shadow of the outsider

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

PRESIDENT RAMON MAGSAYSAY CASTS A huge shadow on the contemporary Philippine scene as his memory is fittingly honored in the Magsaysay Awards tomorrow. He was a giant whose shadow eclipsed those who came under its shade.

The immediate post-war years in which Magsaysay burst into the national political horizon in a meteoric rise to power, in the 1940s and 1950s, were a golden age of Philippine politics incandescent with the luminaries of the Quezon era that ended in 1946 and heralded the entry to the commanding heights of power of his protégés and heirs.

Magsaysay was not part of the scintillating crowd of gifted politicians and senior bureaucrats that included the country's "best and finest," among them Sergio Osmeña Sr., Manuel A. Roxas, Claro M. Recto, Jose P. Laurel, Quintin Paredes, Jose Yulo, Camilo Osias, Eulogio Rodriguez Sr. and others. Magsaysay was not part of that generation of the Filipino oligarchy born into landed wealth and dynastic family connection and reinforced by intellectual accomplishments. This oligarchy was the articulator of Filipino nationalism.

Magsaysay was an outsider. What was remarkable was that with lesser intellectual preparation and without substantial property as credentials to join the political elite, he wrested power from their hands and transformed the social and political and foreign policy agenda of the nation with a populism that put political power in the hands of the Filipino masses.

Magsaysay was the cutting edge of a generational change in Philippine politics that broke the barriers for the entry of a new wave of post-war leaders, who had none of the traditional pedigree of the oligarchy. Among these gate-crashers were Ferdinand Marcos and Diosdado Macapagal.

Magsaysay was, indeed, the first President who was the "man of the masses." He rose to power on his record as a guerrilla leader, the same path to power taken by people like Marcos, Tomas Confesor, Tomas Cabili, Macario Peralta and Ruperto Kangleon.

Magsaysay, as an agent of profound change, was a man of many parts. He is best remembered for his unblemished integrity, for breaking the Huk rebellion in the 1950s, for opening the way for agrarian reform with legislation that improved the land tenure system, for his artesian wells program, rural development, the cleanup of corruption in the bureaucracy (customs and internal revenue), the deployment of the army for civic action as part of the campaign to win the hearts and minds of the people. These were crammed within three years of a presidency cut short by a plane crash in March 1957.

Magsaysay has been criticized by nationalists for having been uncritically pro-American in foreign policy. This issue requires another examination. But it highlights Magsaysay's domination of the nationalist elites. He first subdued them in the 1951 election.

The Nacionalista Party, beaten by President Elpidio Quirino in the 1949 election which was marred by charges of cheating, desperately needed someone who could defeat Quirino. That man was the tremendously popular Magsaysay, then defense secretary, who had gained international fame for breaking the Huk rebellion. Sen. Jose P. Laurel gave way to Magsaysay, who bolted the Liberal Party to be drafted as NP presidential candidate. He won by a landslide.

But his massive poll mandate gave him the platform to overturn the nationalist foreign policy direction of the NP Old Guard. During the Formosa crisis in the early 1950s, Magsaysay lined up the NP-dominated Congress to issue a resolution committing the Philippines to support the United States in defending Formosa against threats of Chinese communist invasion. Recto, the intellectual fountainhead of the NP nationalist school, severely criticized Magsaysay's pro-American position. Magsaysay forced a showdown with Recto in the caucus of party elders. The party Old Guard backed Magsaysay. This established Magsaysay's supremacy in the party. His foreign policy line prevailed. More significantly, the test of strength established Magsaysay's unassailable dominance and capture of Philippine politics in a manner that was reminiscent of President Manuel Quezon during the Commonwealth era. It marked the shift of politics from the Age of the Caudillo to the Age of the Man of the Masses.

After Recto's crushing defeat in the party caucus, Magsaysay excluded him from the NP senatorial slate in the 1955 election. Recto nevertheless ran for the Senate as "guest candidate" of the Liberal Party. The NP scored a near sweep of the Senate seats being contested, but Recto won. The NP sweep was a mandate not only for Magsaysay's pro-US foreign policy, but also for the whole thrust of his reformist administration. No President since then has ever received such a massive vote of confidence from the Filipino people.

As Magsaysay faced the 1957 election, it was a forgone conclusion in political circles that he would be re-elected hands down. There was no credible opponent in sight. In fact, Magsaysay was planning to make a break with the NP and to form a new party drawing on defectors from the LP.

In his memoirs, President Macapagal revealed that Magsaysay had invited him to join the new party. Macapagal said Magsaysay showed him a draft "for safekeeping" of a new party to be called Consolidated People's Party. This revelation has an intriguing implication. It suggests that Magsaysay was planning a single-party state. If he had not crashed in Cebu, Philippine democracy could have taken a different turn.

A question of liability

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THERE'S AN ONLINE PETITION CIRCULATING in the Internet asking for signatures to demand that Petron, which chartered the tanker that spilled thousands of liters of bunker fuel off the coast of Guimaras, "answer (for) this tragedy and be held accountable for the loss of natural resources and livelihood of the people of the island."

If Petron, one of the biggest corporations in the country and partly owned by the government, refuses to take primary responsibility for this environmental and human disaster, the petition urges the public to boycott Petron products "until they have fulfilled their moral and legal obligations to all those affected by this tragedy." Signers are also urged to lobby for stricter laws regulating the transport of oil and all hazardous substances in our oceans.

A text message I received recently put a strident spin on the issue (here translated into regular spelling): "Workers, fishermen and farmers at Guimaras spill site, no masks, gloves, boots. Could suffer from nerve destruction, weakness (see INQUIRER on neurasthenia), dizziness, skin burns or rashes. Instead, Petron pays for useless ads. Oh, not to forget, abject loss of fish to eat or sell. Boycott Petron!"

The "useless ads" the message refers to were full-page advertisements that Petron placed in major newspapers, explaining the extent of its responsibility in this disaster. If the irate texter was right about the primitive conditions the people helping with the cleanup have to work under, then the ads were indeed a callous reaction to a disaster of major proportions.

* * *

THOUGH it has tried to pass on legal liability for the oil spill to the ship owner, Sunshine Maritime Development Corp., Petron has admitted that it has a "moral responsibility" to extend assistance to the affected communities. Another line the company has taken is that it had not wanted nor planned for the accident to happen, and so it cannot be blamed for the ensuing harm that occurred.

Well, I must say that in this instance I fully agree with Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, who likens Petron's legal responsibility to that of ABS-CBN in the "Wowowee" Ultra stampede. Sure, nobody wanted this to happen—hello, that's why it's called an accident—but somebody has to take responsibility for its consequences. Is the oil spill an act of God, or should it not be described rather as an act of criminal negligence?

Already reports have surfaced about Petron's liability in hiring a single-hull tanker to transport the fuel, knowing full well that current regulations require that fuel and other hazardous materials should be transported only by double-hull tankers precisely to prevent disasters like that destroying the waters, shoreline and coastal areas of Guimaras and nearby islands.

There's also an investigation into the capability of the captain and crew of the Solar I, with allegations about their lack of licenses to operate a vessel of its size and nature. If Solar I was indeed operated by an unqualified crew, then the Coast Guard and relevant maritime authorities should likewise be held liable.

* * *

IN A RELATED development, a network of population, health and environment advocates, including Mayor Raul Banias of Concepcion, Iloilo (a municipality under threat of the oil spill) has also issued a call for the government to "finally make Petron responsible for the life-long damage to ecosystems and human health" caused by the oil spill.

The network maintains that this "socio-environmental disaster" took place "mainly due to negligence and incompetence."

"While we believe that the immediate response for health, livelihood and environmental rehabilitation of Guimaras should be the focus of our current efforts," the statement says, "we also believe that *katarungan* (justice) is an equally important call we must deal concurrently with the rebuilding of Guimaras."

By declaring a "state of national calamity," the network says, the government recognizes that "any further leakage from the remaining oil tanks underwater increases the life-long effects to our ecosystem and public health." And yet the declaration is also "a sign of the national government's lack of resolve in handling cases of corporate pollution." Says the network: "A call for corporate accountability should be resolved now and not later."

* * *

THE STATEMENT calls for "adequate risk-reduction measures, sustained rehabilitation of affected areas, and a transparent and quick prosecution of accountable parties, particularly of Petron. And while an immediate cleanup should be done, resolution of the root of the problems should not be delayed."

The network suggests the following steps: immediate lifting of the sunken oil tanker off Guimaras waters; adequate medical attention and health education to the affected communities; civil society participation in the interagency investigation; establishing private sector liability for short- and long-term damage, with Petron's commitment to long-term assistance to Guimaras monitored; a system of monitoring and valuation of the short- and long-term impacts on the environment, individuals and communities; a long-term rehabilitation plan for the environment, health and livelihood of Guimaras and nearby areas.

"Risk-reduction strategies" have also been suggested, including the preparation of "risk maps" for coastal areas and a review of current shipping routes and new options for vessels with hazardous cargo; trust funds to deal with the damage done by oil spills; adequate disaster-response technologies; enforcement of an "oil spill contingency plan"; and legislation on double hulls for ships carrying hazardous cargo, as well as raising penalties for environmental pollution.

Inquisition

COMMENTARY

Junefe Gilig Payot
Institute on Church and Social Issues

A FEW WEEKS BEFORE PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroypo delivered her State of the Nation Address, I went to interview the head of a housing agency to know how the government fared in housing the homeless, as part of our institute's assessment of the Arroyo administration. I ended up being interviewed by her.

First, she asked me what my organization does and so I explained that we do research on housing and other issues confronting the urban poor. She nodded in that automatic way people do when they are just trying to make small talk.

Then she asked me where I graduated from. When I replied that I had graduated from the Ateneo, she expressed surprise that I work for an NGO! I have seen such a reaction several times but I can never understand the premise behind it, which is: if you are a university graduate you should not be wasting your education working for a low-paying job like NGO work. Of course, the fact that you are from a good university like the Ateneo, where tuition is high, makes it all a bigger waste.

I really wanted for her inquisition to end not only because I was running out of time to ask her about her agency's accomplishments (maybe that was her intention) but also because I didn't know how to explain myself well, especially inside that freezer of an office (tip to researchers: wear something light when visiting a minor bureaucrat but make sure you have a jacket when visiting a high-ranking official).

Suddenly, I blurted out that I am currently studying at the University of the Philippines. I don't know why I volunteered the information. Perhaps I thought that it would offset my being from the Ateneo and lessen her disbelief. People have this notion that if you are from UP, you have a more rebellious streak, which somehow makes it easier to understand why you are working with "troublemakers" like the urban poor.

That notion, of course, is not very accurate. While many UP students still have that burning desire to work for the poor like the two female students who were abducted by armed men a few months ago, many UP students now come to school in fancy cars and with no other aim but to get richer than their wealthy parents.

Anyway, I quickly regretted volunteering the information. When she asked me what I was "mastering" in and I replied that I was studying to become a lawyer, she smiled as if finally she had exposed the greedy part of me and said, "*Sigurado, yayaman ka diyan.*"

I hated her guts for assuming that I was in it for the money. But I also understood her. After all, it's true of many lawyers, especially those who go on to become members of Congress.

So I had to explain to her, almost apologetically, that I was in fact led to the study of law by my experience of working with the urban poor. For instance, some sites proclaimed for socialized housing are being contested by well-connected families who are claiming the lands for themselves, and you need a good lawyer against them.

To remove any doubt from her mind that I was an isolated nut case, I told her that some of my classmates at the UP College of Law are also in it for the same reason. For instance, there's Rica who works for an NGO that gives legal services for environmental issues, and there's Miguel who works with peasants and hopes to finally secure the coco levy funds for them when he becomes a lawyer. I also told her that I have professors who are using their legal expertise to help the marginalized in the country.

I don't know if I was able to explain myself well. It was the same awkward feeling I felt when I had to explain to my fellow Filipino students in Japan that I was going back to the Philippines to work. They could not understand that while some people risk entering Japan illegally, I was wasting an opportunity to stay there. I felt I was also under inquisition then.

I have nothing against the Filipino migrant workers who practically have no choice but to work abroad. However, I and the others who studied in Japan had a choice to come back here to work.

It's a very uneasy feeling. In a way, it must be worse than being grilled by the Supreme Court because, unlike in the latter where you are questioned by at most 15 justices, each person who challenges your life decision represents a whole segment of society. Also, one is merely made to explain legal issues before the justices, while in the former you are being made to explain what's in your heart and therefore your very existence.

These experiences led me to the sad realization that this is the real state of the nation: the educated using their education, whether in law or in other fields, only to make money for themselves, whether here or abroad. Like my bureaucrat-inquisitor, everyone seems to think it's the most natural thing to do. We have created a national culture that considers wealth as the true measure of success—with no small help from the national leadership, I must add. Just look at the official and real family of Ms Arroyo.

Luckily I don't lack for good examples: my co-workers in social development, my classmates, my law professors and other nut cases before me. They too must have been made to explain themselves, their plans and their sanity questioned by friends and families, but they marched on.

Time will come when people who naturally feel that they'd be happier and more useful here working with the marginalized will not be subjected to inquisition. For now, I just have to prepare for my next inquisitor so that I will be able to explain myself very well. After all, I am studying to become a lawyer--and for unpopular causes at that.

Present!

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

TODAY IS THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE DISappeared, "disappeared" being a translation of the Spanish "*desaparecidos.*"

In the 1970s and 1980s, Latin Americans began to use that term to refer to people who disappeared under politically repressive regimes. Like the Philippines, several Latin American countries suffered through that decade under US-sponsored military dictatorships. The most brutal ones were those of Chile and Argentina, where the regimes conducted "dirty wars" that included thousands of liberals and leftists being picked up by the authorities, never to be seen again.

Eventually, the full brutality of these disappearances surfaced as survivors, and the military themselves, came out with the stories of what had happened. In many cases, the victims would simply be executed and dumped into unmarked graves. But in Argentina, the most horrifying of stories involved *vuelos de la muerte* (death flights), where sedated political prisoners would be loaded into military planes, then dumped into the sea.

Argentina also had the *chiquitos desaparecidos,* disappeared children. Some of the abducted political prisoners were pregnant women, and the military would sometimes wait until the mothers delivered. The mothers would then be executed, and then the children were spirited away for adoption.

Nilo Valerio

Human rights groups estimate that during the Marcos dictatorship, there were about 1,600 disappeared Filipinos. I had a personal link to one of them, and I thought that sharing his story would make the disappeared more real.

Back in the 1980s, when I was working for a health NGO, one of our frequent visitors was Daisy Valerio, an NGO worker who would come by selling bamboo products from her communities' income-generating projects.

I knew Daisy's husband, Nilo Valerio, a former SVD priest who had gone to the hills to join the New People's Army (NPA). Many religious like him had chosen that option because they felt it was the only way to address society's injustices.

Then one day it happened. Nilo disappeared. We learned later from witnesses in the town of Bakun, Benguet, that there was an encounter on Aug. 24, 1985 between the military and the NPA. Three rebels were killed: Nilo, 35; Reseta Fernandez, 27; and Soledad Salvador, 28.

The soldiers beheaded the three rebels, and used one of the women's heads for target practice. The bodies were buried in a single grave and the heads in another site. The graves were all unmarked. The acting chief of staff of the Armed Forces at that time was Fidel Ramos, and he himself described the executions as "barbaric." He promised an impartial investigation and punishment for those involved.

To this day, the bodies have not been recovered, and no soldier has been prosecuted.

Daisy eventually became secretary general of the Families of Victims of Involuntary Disappearances (Find). In 2003, Daisy and her two sons visited the barangay where Nilo was killed. She says elderly people came up to the sons for a tearful reunion of sorts; they could see the sons' resemblance to "Ka Bobot," Nilo's underground name.

Bakun residents spoke too about the need for healing for their community, and how this has not happened because the bodies have not been recovered.

It is the 1,600 disappeared Filipinos that keeps the entire nation from recovering. Even more disturbing is that the disappearances have continued. Even after democracy was restored, disappearances continued through the presidencies of Aquino, Ramos and Estrada, although not on the same scale as during the Marcos regime. Sadly, there were also the disappeared from within the NPA when, in the 1980s, paranoid cadres executed their own comrades suspected of being deep penetration agents (DPAs).

In August 2001, Daisy and other members of Find had an audience with President Macapagal-Arroyo, who was barely seven months in office. After listening to their stories, the President told them: "I hope there will be no disappearances in my time."

Daisy tells me she still cries now for Nilo, but more often, she cries, too, out of anger at what's happening today under Ms Arroyo, with almost daily reports of new arrests, murders and, yes, disappearances.

Living on

Anthropologists note that only humans bury the dead, with mourning and with reverence. Burying and grieving for the dead are among the hallmarks of our humanity, so the phenomenon of the disappeared is especially disturbing. What kind of low life, one has to ask, can kill, and then defile the dead?

Social scientists have coined the term "othering" to describe the process here. People have to be indoctrinated, brainwashed, to hate the "enemy" and to think of them as less than human. The other day the INQUIRER had a photograph of Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, Ms Arroyo's leading star in her all-out war against the Left, addressing an anti-communist rally in Pampanga. The caption said he talked for two hours. One can imagine the rage that he built up in that rally. I'm sure he didn't call for arrests, or torture or murder. The master demagogue knows better.

The government may want to pick up a few lessons from the repressive 1970s and 1980s. Succinctly: the dirty wars failed, and failed miserably. Rather than instilling fear in the population, each disappearance, each human rights violation drove more people to join the opposition and eventually, the repressive regimes, even with the full force of the military behind them, collapsed.

Appropriately, the practice of "disappearing" the detainees has worked against the dictators and their butchers. Normally, these criminals go into exile and bide their time, hoping to benefit from statutes of limitations or a time limit for the prosecution of crimes. But a revolutionary ruling from a Chilean judge, Juan Guzman Tapia, has changed this and has become the basis for international law. Tapia ruled that for as long as people remain "disappeared," these detainees are, technically, still under "sequestration," in the custody of the military, so until they produce the bodies, they remain liable for criminal prosecution.

Eventually, we will know who are behind the new wave of terror in the Philippines. The truth will always come out because human rights violations remain etched in people's memories, including those of the soldiers ordered to kill and maim. But it is the relatives and friends of the "disappeared" who often end up at the forefront of organizations and movements to bring justice. In Buenos Aires, Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo are well known, grandmothers who keep their vigil at a central plaza calling for justice for their disappeared children and grandchildren.

In Latin American countries, memorial services are conducted where they read out the names of the disappeared. As each name is read, people respond "*Presente!*" It's a way of saying the disappeared are still with us.

Must examinees take the heat for elders' fault?

IN THE RAGING CONTROVERSY over the June 2006 nursing licensure examination, the Professional Regulation Commission has been bothered by this question: Should the examinees be made to retake the exam? It is argued that this is the only way to remove any doubt about their professional competence. This might appear to be a win-win solution, but I beg to disagree.

It will also show to one and all how unfairly and unjustly we are treating the examinees. Is a "retake" the only way to remove the doubts about their competence? Is it not also a form of admission that this batch of examinees did indeed attempt to cheat, only that they were caught? But has an examinee been indeed caught cheating in that exam?

Is it fair to burden them with the presumption that there must have been cheating simply because there was a leakage of test questions? Is it not possible that somebody intentionally "sabotaged" the exam by leaking the test questions in the most public way possible (presenting them in a mall, even using PowerPoint in the presence of deans from some 22 nursing schools and examinees, who were so shocked to take him seriously only to find out later on, to their great surprise, that indeed some of the questions came out in the exam)?

We take note that the students who were present in the so-called "enhancement" were there to attend a review class, not to participate in any cheating. If indeed there was an attempt to sabotage the exam (an angle which the NBI is looking into), is there a way to protect the interest of the examinees?

Please, let us not insult them by giving them the false assurance that passing the board exam is all it takes to prove one's professional competence—as if luck does not play a part here; and that there is nothing we can do to protect them from the negligence and irresponsibility of their elders in the profession and the people they have come to trust, to look after their welfare and safeguard their legitimate interests. Is justice a less important concern here than creating job opportunities?

—FR. JESUS V. DUMAUAL,
Missionaries of the Sacred Heart,
108 4th St., New Manila,
Quezon City

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Incredible claim of independence

IN THE AUG. 18 ISSUE OF THE INQUIRER, election lawyer Romulo Macalintal took exception to the editorial titled "Sneaky" (PDI, 8/10/06), claiming that he filed his motion before the Supreme Court to allow the use of the automated counting machines (ACMs) without ay encouragement from Malacañang. In fact, in a TV interview with ANC's Tina Monzon-Palma, Macalintal stated that the opinion he was expressing on TV then was his own personal view and that he was acting independently and without the knowledge of his influential client, the President.

What he said sounded truly strange to me. Is it believable that a lawyer of President Macapagal-Arroyo would not consult her before filing a petition involving a very controversial issue? Wasn't Macalintal taxing too much the credulity of our people? As usually said of highly incredible tales, "Tell it to the Marines." The Philippine Free Press, another popular magazine known for its fairness and truthfulness, in its Aug. 19, 2006 editorial titled "If you can't beat 'em, cheat 'em," also cast serious doubts on Macalintal's claim.

On my part, I say: Macalintal may appear to be energetic. However, the way he explained to the media the non-involvement of his client in his pending motion is highly incredible.

—ARTURO M. TOPACIO JR.,
UE Law Alumni Association
Hall of Fame Awardee,
Manila and Cavite

No suspension order for Mamburao officials

THIS PERTAINS TO THE news item "2 mayors charged with graft." (PDI, 8/14/06) There is indeed a case pending at the Office of the Ombudsman against officials of the Municipality of Mamburao (Mayor Joel Panaligan, treasurer Deoridina Reyes, accountant Mary Anne Alcaide), but this has not yet reached a final resolution.

As of Aug. 14, 2006, the three officials have not received any notice of suspension as claimed in the news story. And as with all cases pending with the Ombudsman, no information on this case has been released to the public or the media.

I believe that the treatment of the story has been unfair to its subjects as well as to the readers who deserve to know the truth. It is hoped that the INQUIRER would live up to its motto—"Balanced news, fearless views"—in its stories. It is also hoped that as a major broadsheet in the country, it would be wary of people who would like to use it as a vehicle for mere political propaganda or harassment.

News stories should always be backed up by solid facts, not motivated by politics.

—DEORIDINA REYES,
Mamburao,
Occidental Mindoro

The story was based on press material (dated Aug. 11, 2006) released by the Office of the Ombudsman. Reporting the news, not politics, was the prime motivation behind the story.

—NORMAN BORDADORA,
PDI reporter

Maintain ban on Pacific white shrimp

A NEWS ITEM BY YOLANDA Sotelo-Fuertes (PDI, 8/9/06) reported that Speaker Jose de Venecia has invited Chinese businessmen to invest in Pangasinan in the farming of the Pacific white shrimp (*Peneaus vannamei*), an exotic species. It also said the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) has started to commercialize this species.

De Venecia and BFAR officials should know that the importation and farming of the Pacific white shrimp remain prohibited by BFAR's Fisheries Administrative Order (FAO) 207 except for "scientific and educational purposes."

Of course, BFAR is pushing to have this order replaced with a new one that will allow the importation and commercial farming of this exotic species. But before going headlong into this project, JDV and BFAR should consider not just the arguments for but also those against the lifting of the ban.

For one, there are just too many unreliable foreign sources that could bring in Pacific white shrimp infected with deadly shrimp diseases. In fact, this species has been smuggled into the country since the second half of the 1990s and is suspected to be the source of the White Spot Syndrome Virus that infected the local black tiger shrimp (*Peneaus monodon*) on a massive scale in 1997 and has since halved the country's shrimp production.

Those who favor lifting the ban on the Pacific white shrimp argue that we should allow only stocks that are certified pathogen-free. But this is easier said than done. Uncertified stocks are cheaper and with the country's "porous" borders due to weak law enforcement, smuggling of this species is likely to continue even after the ban on its importation shall have been lifted.

Widespread malpractice in local shrimp farming also contribute to the spread of shrimp diseases. These include highly congested stocking, improper waste disposal that breeds harmful microorganisms, and overuse of antibiotics that has resulted in resistant viral strains. With the malpractice, can the Pacific white shrimp remain pathogen-free for long?

After nearly two decades of shrimp farming, local shrimp farmers have yet to clean up their act. Given this situation, the government should invoke the precautionary principle in the introduction of exotic species and maintain the ban on the Pacific white shrimp.

We should put an end to the smuggling of this exotic species, adopt sustainable aquaculture practices and impose a strict monitoring system on the local shrimp industry to curb the spread of shrimp diseases.

—JAIME ESCOBER JR.,
information officer,
Tambuyog Development
Center, 91 V. Luna Road,
Sikatuna Village, QC

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On the accident that killed news people in Pamplona

WE CONDOLE WITH THE FAMILIES of the ABC-5 news team members who met an untimely death in an accident in Pamplona, Camarines Sur. If we are really sad and concerned for them and their families, we should do something to prevent such accident from happening again in that treacherous highway. I frequently pass by that stretch of road which is known for the many accidents that have happened there. And these are my observations:

1. Many buses and cargo trucks traveling on this route are overloaded and they are not apprehended by the police or concerned government agencies. It is doubtful if these vehicles are even checked for their road-worthiness.

2. The drivers of these vehicles are apparently not properly educated on traffic rules and road courtesy. Also, they are not properly attired (wearing slippers of the "*ipit*" rubber-type instead of shoes, and *sando* shirts; they smoke most of the time and use cell phones while driving). Maybe a number of them have expired driver's licenses, or do not have one at all; or some of them may be driving under the influence of liquor or drugs.

4. The police, the Land Transportation Office and Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board do not enforce rules on overspeeding, overtaking on curves and corners, the use of bright headlights during nighttime, etc.

5. The roads are not properly maintained by the Department of Public Works and Highways and are full of potholes.

I believe the failure of these agencies to fulfill their responsibilities lays the seeds for many of the accidents that occur in that stretch. President Macapagal-Arroyo should take action on the negligence of these agencies, otherwise she should also be held accountable under the principle of command responsibility.

—ESTEL RIMANDO,
Pamplona, Camarines Sur

High power rates in Albay questioned

THIS IS AN UNSOLICITED HELP we are extending for and in behalf of the electric consumers of the province of Albay.

I would like to know why Albay Electric Cooperative (Aleco) III charges P8.22 per kilowatt-hour, compared to Leyte Electric Cooperative (Leyeco) II that charges P5.9638 per kWh only. This makes a difference of P2.2562 per kWh.

It is a very well-known fact that both electric cooperatives are getting power from their own geothermal power plants. Such a disparity in electric power rates deserves an explanation from Aleco III.

In addition to this, this usurious power rate makes payment of electric bills a heavy financial burden, and not only an obligation. Housewives who are household budget officers are in a quandary as to how they will be able to make both ends meet in this terrible predicament.

—JOSE R. DYCOCO,
San Isidro, Libon, Albay

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Rolando B. Fernandez**

Ifugao rice festival to revive terraces

By Frank Cimatu
Kiangan, Ifugao

THIS RICE HARVEST festival is not bidding for any Guinness record. Rather, the Bakle'd Kiangan, held last week in Julongan village in Kiangan, Ifugao, is a festival to revive the rice terraces and preserve the Ifugao culture that revolves around rice.

The *binakle* (pounded glutinous rice wrapped in banana leaves) passed around during the festivities is very similar to the Tagalogs' *suman*, the *patupat* or *tupig* of the Ilocos, and the *moron* of Leyte, but the festival allows one to participate in all the processes that went into it.

The pounding of the rice in the huge *lu-ong* (stone mortar) is an exercise in rhythm in itself. Three men or women in traditional Ifugao clothes try to find rhythm in pounding with heavy wooden pestles (*al-u*). In the olden days, the warriors would try to break the others' pestles with the fewest spills possible, according to locals.

Women gather the pounded rice and winnow them in another ritual known as the *yapyapan*. Bottles of *baya* (rice wine) are, meanwhile, passed around. Pigs are also butchered nearby.

Former Ifugao Gov. Teodoro Baguilat Jr., who grew up in Kiangan's Tuplac village, said he wasn't aware of the *bakle* during his childhood.

"My grandmother would bring home the *binakle* and I wouldn't bother where it came from. Later, I learned that it came from a thanksgiving festival," he said.

THE *BUL-UL* (Ifugao rice granary guardian) takes center stage during the *bakle* or rice harvest festival in Kiangan, Ifugao, as native priests ask their gods to bless the festivities and the community. PHOTOS BY EV ESPIRITU

"When I was in college, the *bakle* [festival] stopped," Baguilat, 40, said.

One reason is that some farmers have switched to lowland rice varieties that may give two croppings a year unlike the traditional varieties that are harvested once a year, he said.

Less profitable

Although less profitable, Baguilat said the use of the traditional rice varieties was crucial in the 12 rice rituals, starting from the *lukya* or the opening of the *tungod* (rice cycle).

In the *lukya*, held in December, bundles of rice are brought out of the granaries and blessed by the *mumbaki* (high priests). In July or August, the *ani* or harvest ritual has the *mumbakol* or the highest-ranking *mumbaki* reciting the rice myth.

Baguilat, during his term as governor, revived the rituals in Julongan, but he admitted that it would take a lot of money to revive them.

Now that he is president of the Save the Ifugao Rice Terraces Movement (Sitmo), he has embarked on community spirit and cultural tourism to finance the holding of the rituals.

Baguilat joined hands with Kiangan Mayor Albert Indunan and prominent residents in the area, like retired Col. Victor Bolnayan, in holding the *bakle*.

Sitmo also brought in about 60 tourists from Baguio City and Metro Manila to join in the festivities. US Peace Corps volunteers gave the festival an international flavor.

Some of the tourists were either born in Kiangan or have parents born in Kiangan, but who have not witnessed a traditional rice festival.

During the festival, *mumbaki* Ventura Piwan and Francisco Tuginay called on the gods for blessing as some residents beat the gongs and dance around the village hall.

"We plan to hold the other rice rituals in other places like Hapao or Banaue towns and also bring in tourists who want to know more about the Ifugao culture," Baguilat said.

IFUGAO women winnow traditional rice used in the production of Kiangan's native rice cakes.

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'Commission' racket at BCDA bared

Authority director denies allegation

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—A GROUP OF contractors claimed a Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) official had required them to pay between P1 million and P5 million each but had failed to secure for them subcontracts in the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway Project.

The group wrote to the INQUIRER that the BCDA official introduced most of them to the project's Japanese contractors to "show faithfulness to his promises, so to speak." The entire project costs P21 billion.

The project's first phase is being undertaken by the Kajima, Obayashi, JFE Engineering and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Joint Venture. Its second phase is handled by the Hazama, Taisei and Nippon Steel Joint Venture.

After collecting the money, the official "either totally cut off any communications with us or continuously evaded us each time we seek his audience," the contractors said.

Sources in the construction industry and a former BCDA officer identified the BCDA official as BCDA director Rex Chan.

Chan, when contacted by the INQUIRER on Tuesday, denied the charges.

Politicians' endorsement

"They're trying to malign me and wanted me out of the BCDA," he said.

He said he did not endorse any local contractor to the joint ventures unless they were endorsed by congressmen and mayors.

"I did not endorse anyone without the endorsement of my boss," he said, referring to BCDA president and chief executive officer Narciso Abaya.

"*Hindi ako nakikialam sa mga* negotiations *nila* (I do not meddle in their negotiations)," he said.

He said it was the Japanese consortium that determined the subcontractors based on their capabilities.

"So how can I ask something from those fellows?" he asked. "*Hindi ko ginagawa ang panghihingi. Hindi baleng magutom* (I do not solicit money from anyone. I would rather go hungry)," he said.

One of the contractors said in the letter that "we are now placed in a no-win situation and our hopes of even recovering our money have become hopeless."

They said the payments were made before construction started for the 94-km road in April 2005.

Higher fees

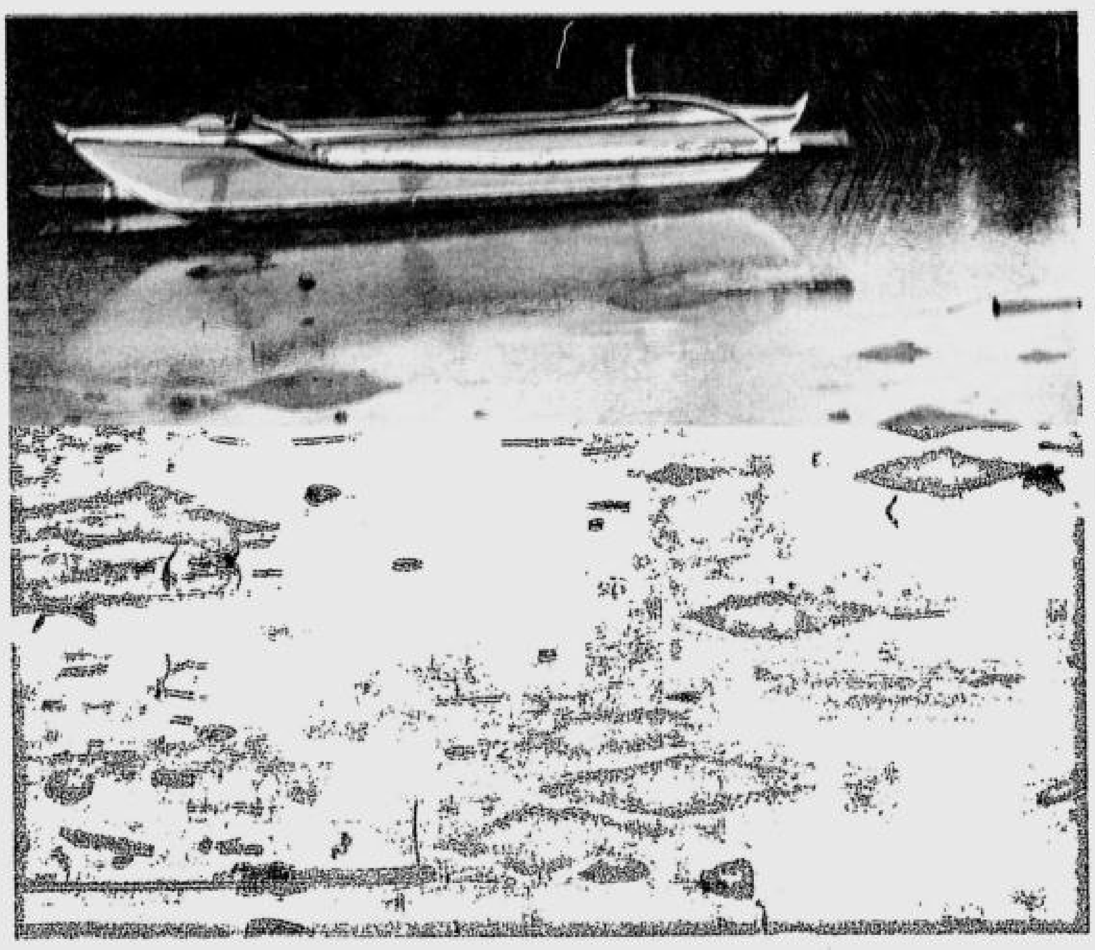
An industry source disputed the amount that passed hands, saying as much as P20 million was asked from some contractors.

A contractor who bagged a subcontract confirmed the practice of tapping BCDA officials or politicians as *padrino* (middlemen).

In his case, he said he negotiated straight with officials of the Japanese consortium.

Willy Castor, president of the National Contractors Association of the Philippines, said he had not received a copy of the complaint by the CCLC.

"Some subcontractors came to me but their complaints were about low prices of services and supplies," he said.



DIRECT HIT
Inampulugan Island suffered a direct hit from the oil spill that wrought havoc in the Guimaras Sea. An empty boat anchored off Inampulugan is testimony to the spill's effects on the livelihood of the island's fishermen.
ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

Vets rescue of animals distressed by Mayon

LEGAZPI CITY—VETERINARY officials from the local government units and the nongovernment organization Animal Welfare Inc. led a medical mission for animals in the villages of Mabinit, Bonga and Matanag, all within the Extended Danger Zone (EDZ) around Mayon Volcano.

About 1,000 animals were gathered in centers or "pull-out" areas on Monday and given free checkups by the NGO, officials and staff of the Provincial Veterinary Office, City Veterinary Office, Regional Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory and 25 veterinary students from the Camarines Sur Agricultural College (CSAC).

Animals from Barangay Bagong Abre, which is adjacent to Matanag but outside the EDZ, were also included in the groups' mission.

OK— INHALE, EXHALE!

"We were able to gather chickens, cows, pigs, carabaos and even dogs and provided them with free animal feeds, medicines and vitamins," said city veterinarian Nancy Andes.

When thousands of villagers fled their homes to avoid a violent eruptioin of Mayon, the abandoned animals suffered separation from their caretakers, she said.

Andes said most of the animals were diagnosed with malnutrition and parasitism.

These health problems may lead to a delay in the animals' fertility and consequently reduce the income of villagers who depend on livestock raising for their livelihood, said officials.

Mayon's eruption disrupted the normal lives of the animals who also suffered discomfort from the heat generated by the 2,462-meter volcano.

"The caretakers used to bring these animals every morning to the foot of the volcano to graze on the fertile grounds around Mayon," Andes said.

Veterinary students from CSAC collected blood and fecal samples from the animals for laboratory analysis and double check cases of parasitism.

A series of five small ash explosions indicated a slight increase in the volcano's activity during the past 24-hour observation period, volcanologists said yesterday.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said more explosions are to be expected after the explosions that sent 100-meter to 500-meter high ash clouds drifting west-northwest.

There were 313 tremors and 24 volcanic earthquakes while the sulfur dioxide emission rate was measured at 3,364 tons per day, Phivolcs reports added. *Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Army, NPA clash, break ceasefire around Mayon

LUCENA CITY—AMID TENSION from the continuing restiveness of Mayon Volcano, government forces and communist rebels engage in armed encounters in Albay province.

On Monday morning,, patrolling combat soldiers and militiamen from the Army's 22nd Infantry Battalion engaged a band of New People's Army rebels in a gunfight in Soa, Malinao town, said Lt. Col. Rhoderick Parayno, chief of the military's Southern Luzon Command public information office.

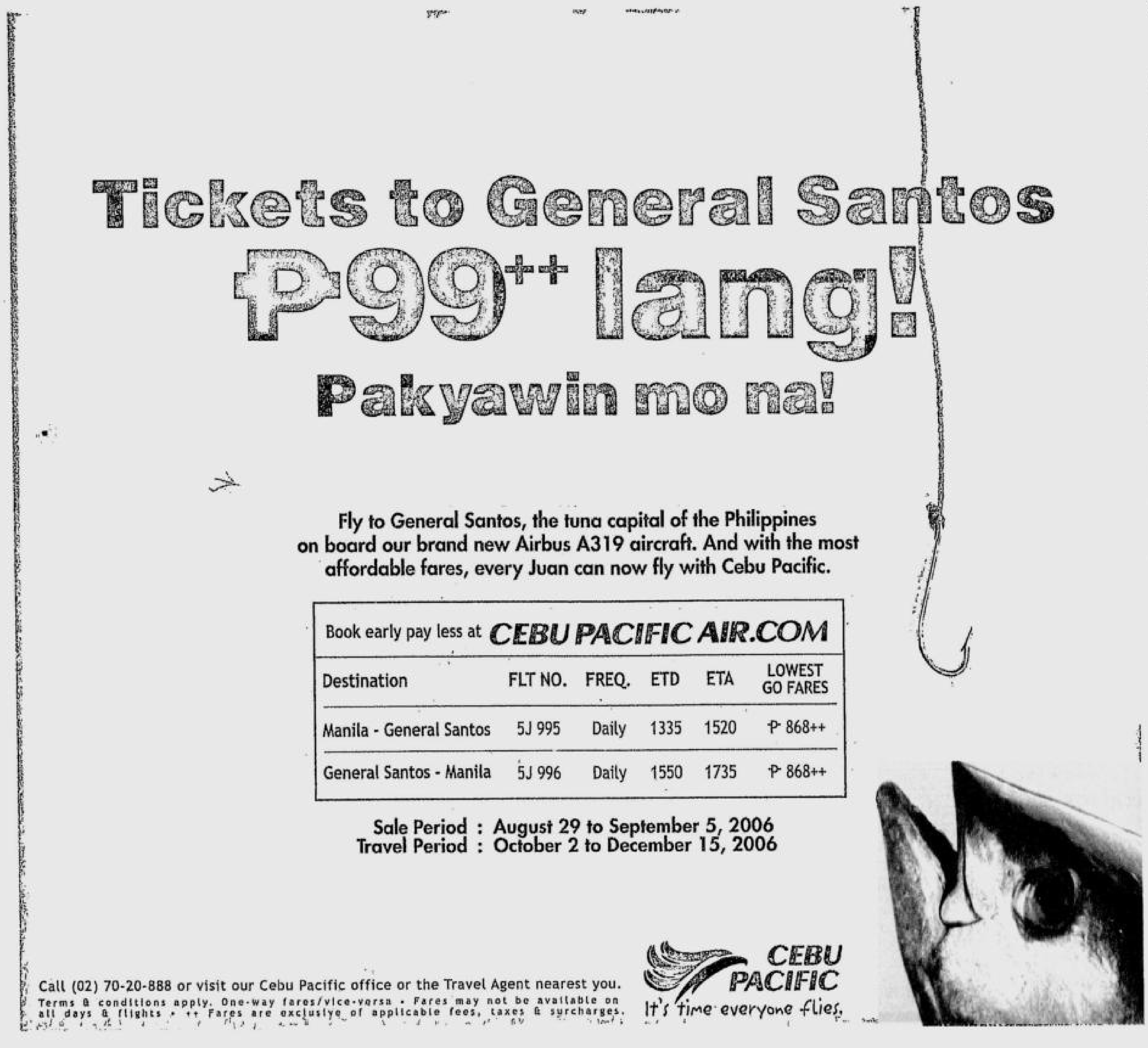
A certain Crisanto Ceriola, alias "Ka Russel," led the rebels in the gunfight, which lasted for about 30 minutes, before the communist guerrillas retreated toward Buhi town in Camarines Sur province, added Parayno.

The government forces recovered one M-16 rifle, communist documents and personal belongings left by the fleeing rebels.

Several hours later, another group of Army soldiers from the 66th Infantry Battalion encountered an estimated 20 heavily armed NPA rebels in the village of Mauraro in the town of Guinobatan.

Parayno said government forces suffered no casualties in both encounters.

He said based on reports from the field, the communist guerrillas suffered a still undetermined number of casualties in the two encounters. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*



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Top N. Vizcaya cops relieved over 'jueteng'

By Melvin Gascon
Inquirer Northern Luzon

CAMP SATURNINO DUMLAO, NUEVA VIZCAYA—The police director in Cagayan Valley has ordered the relief of Nueva Vizcaya's top police officials in a move that police sources linked to the continued operation of *jueteng* in the province.

In a radio message sent to the provincial police office here on Monday, Chief Supt. Jefferson Soriano stripped Senior Supt. Rogelio Damazo, acting provincial director, and Supt. Agripino Lopez Jr., provincial police intelligence chief, of their posts.

The order, however, did not explain the reasons for the two officials' relief.

Gov. Luisa Cuaresma, during Tuesday's meeting of the provincial peace and order council (PPOC) here, lamented how police officers had been ousted from their posts by their superiors without prior consultation with local officials.

"This is now becoming a common complaint especially among our mayors. It is also unfair for some police chiefs to be removed from their posts without the benefit of knowing the reasons, because, for all we know, they may actually be performing well," Cuaresma said.

She, however, acknowledged, that the relief could have been due to illegal gambling activities in Nueva Vizcaya.

Police sources said the relief could be traced to the officials' supposed failure to stop *jueteng* here in the past months.

"The reason [for the relief] is public knowledge. Everybody knows that *jueteng* has been openly operating for quite a while now," the source said.

But Lopez clarified that his relief was recalled on Tuesday, citing a phone call he said he received from the regional police office in Tuguegarao City in Cagayan. No reasons were given for the recall, he said.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach Damazo for comment. A member of his staff said he went to Tuguegarao City for a conference. *Melvin Gascon, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

MILF rebels free 18 hostages

MIDSAYAP, NORTH COTABATO—Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels agreed late Monday to free the 18 people they took as hostages during an attack on a predominantly Muslim village here earlier that day, the military said yesterday.

Army Col. Danilo Garcia, 603rd Infantry Brigade chief, said the hostages, who were erroneously reported earlier as numbering five, were not harmed.

"But obviously, they suffered psychological and emotional stress," he said.

Garcia said the rebels agreed to release the hostages after they got the body of a comrade who was killed in the clash with soldiers.

Two civilians were wounded by stray bullets when militiamen battled about 50 rebels who stormed the village of Palomugin at around 5 a.m..

Saguira Musa, 50, one of the hostages, told the INQUIRER that the rebels had threatened to shoot them.

"We were told that we were being used against pursuing militiamen," she said.

"They promised to free us once they retrieved their slain companion," she added.

Tandog Kamid, 50, another freed hostage, described the attackers as "our regular visitors."

He said on Monday that the rebels, led by a Commander Buds, were looking for a Commander Bob, a rebel who has become a militiaman in the village.

He said the MILF rebels and commander Bob had been feuding.

Shortly after the rebels arrived, Kamid said Commander Bob's men engaged them in a gunfight.

Garcia said government troops arrived and joined the militiamen in repulsing the attackers.

"As the group of Commander Buds was fleeing, they took 18 people, mostly Muslim and Christian farmers, and used them as human shields against pursuing government troops," he said.

Garcia said that after freeing the hostages, the rebels returned to Barangay Palomugin but they were driven away by soldiers of the 38th Infantry Battalion under Capt. Abdulmaguid Buisan at about 8 p.m.

Midsayap Mayor Romeo Araña said he had sent emissaries to convince the warring parties to amicably settle their differences. *Edwin O. Fernandez and Nash B. Maulana, Inquirer Mindanao*

Temporary water interruption in portions of Taguig needed to upgrade facilities and improve water distribution

Manila Water is currently upgrading its facilities and distribution network to improve the distribution of water in the East Zone. We regret that we will have to temporarily interrupt water supply in portions of Taguig starting 10:00 p.m., Thursday, August 31, 2006, up to 6:00 a.m., September 1, due to the interconnection of large pipes along the East Service Road corner C-5. The following areas will be affected: FTI Complex and portions of Barangay Western Bicutan.

Manila Water Company advises all residents of the said areas to store enough water prior to the scheduled interruptions to avoid inconvenience.

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Peso nears P50-level

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO NEARLY BREACHED THE 51:$1 key barrier for the first time in five months yesterday as a rosier macroeconomic outlook inspired foreign investors to snap up local stocks and debt papers.

The local currency closed near the day's high at 51.05 to the US dollar, its strongest finish since April 4, gaining from Monday's close of 51.21:$1.

"The market sentiment is very positive, especially given the improving political outlook," said Jose Emmanuel Hilado, president of foreign exchange association ACI Philippines and treasurer at BDO Private Bank.

The peso yesterday traded between a high of 51.04 and a low of 51.23 against the greenback.

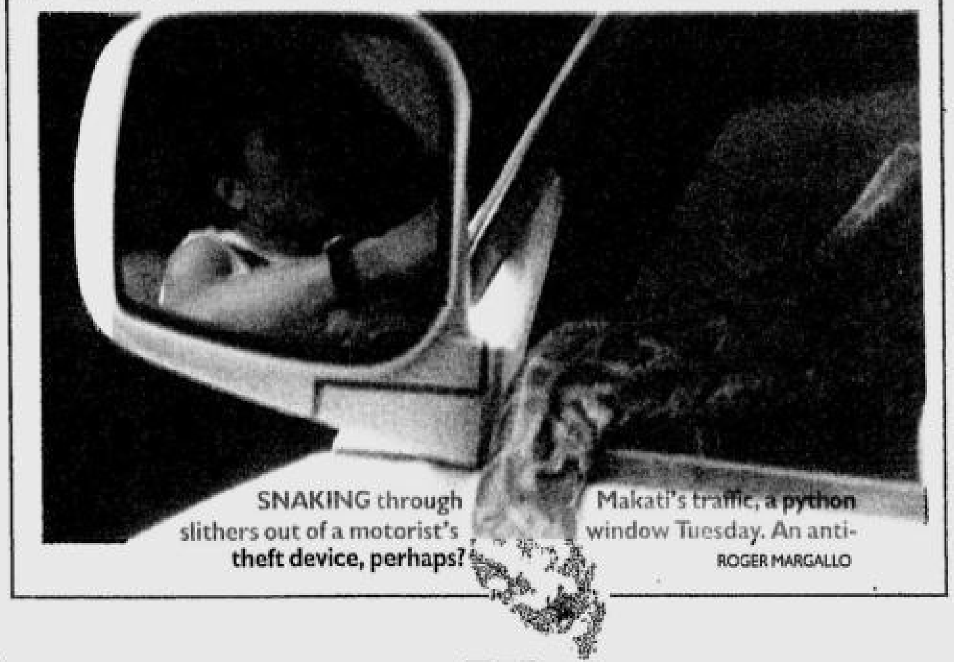
Since the start of the year, the local currency has gained about 3.8 percent or over P2 against the US dollar.

In the absence of further shocks, Hilado said the peso was bound to retest its year's peak of 50.88 against the US dollar with the expected influx of remittances from overseas Filipino workers ahead of the Christmas season. Hilado projected the peso to peak at the 50-level later this year.

Other local currency traders noted that corporate demand for dollars had thinned out while demand for pesos surged on the last day of the offering period for the government's local bond swap.

The government expects to issue as much as P20 billion worth of new 10-year local bonds in exchange for other government securities after the deadline to swap debt papers lapsed yesterday.

The bond exchange program aims to retire securities which are not actively traded in the secondary market and replace them with securities of tenor most demanded by the market Currency traders also said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas appeared not keen on curbing the peso's sharp appreciation given its positive impact on its inflation target.



SNAKING through Makati's traffic, a python slithers out of a motorist's window Tuesday. An anti-theft device, perhaps?
ROGER MARGALLO

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Erap docu rated X

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

FOLLOWING A SECOND AND FINAL review, the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) has given a documentary on the life of deposed President Estrada an "X" rating, meaning it is "disapproved for airing on television."

In a phone interview, MTRCB chair Ma. Consoliza Laguardia said the board cited four reasons for banning the documentary titled "*Ang Mabuhay Para sa Masa* (To Live for the Masses)."

According to the board's memorandum dated Aug. 28, the Estrada documentary tended to "threaten the political stability of the state; undermine the faith and confidence of the people in the government; [be] libelous or defamatory; [pertained] to matters that are sub judice in nature."

The second board committee was chaired by lawyer Paulino Cases Jr., with members Fr. Nicasio Cruz and journalists Edmund Sicam, Orlando Ros Olgado and Mario Hernando.

According to the board decision, it was Sicam who pointed out that "the last three minutes of the [docu]" provided the basis for the ban, particularly the narration: "*nalalapit na ang bagong umaga dahil sa lakas ng puwersa ng masa at muli ng babangon* [a new day is dawning because of the power of the masses that will rise again]."

Three other committee members agreed with Sicam and deemed the docu unsuitable for public viewing. The lone dissenting opinion was expressed by Hernando, a film critic.

G for suitable

The board memo said Hernando had "found no grounds for disapproval" and rated the documentary "G," that is, "suitable for all ages."

In a phone interview, Hernando explained his vote: "It may sound corny but I firmly believe that freedom of expression should be upheld. I am just standing by my principle."

Hernando said he couldn't understand the fuss being made over the documentary.

"The track record of the Arroyo government cannot be erased by just one docu that was set to be shown on a UHF channel [UN TV 37]," he said.

Hernando said the documentary was "well-made and effective."

Laguardia agreed, saying that "the docu's first part, which recounted Estrada's rise to power, was commendable. However, it is in recounting his ouster that the docu became highly opinionated, resorting to defamatory statements against certain personalities, including the late Jaime Cardinal Sin."

According to Hernando, the documentary also mentioned controversies like the P728-million alleged fertilizer scam and the alleged "conspiracy" that resulted in the second Edsa people power uprising and Estrada's ouster.

The pictures of Sin, ABS-CBN head Gabby Lopez and the members of the Makati Business Club appeared in the section on the "conspiracy," according to Laguardia and Hernando.

This was the second committee that voted to ban the Estrada documentary.

The board's first review committee, composed of Marra Lanot, Lucy Orense and the late Gregorio Cendaña, disapproved the documentary on Aug. 23.

Laguardia advised the firm's producer, Rey A. David, president of Publicasia, Inc., to apply for a second review.

In a phone interview, David said the matter was now "a question of law that should be addressed legally… in the courts."

He said he would file a case on Thursday with a lower court or the Court of Appeals, on the advice of a team of lawyers, led by Rufus Rodriguez.

"We were advised by board members to cut certain portions of the docu. We cannot abide by that," he said.

"There was due process. We treated the Erap docu like any other TV material," said Laguardia, adding that the producers were free to take the case to court.

Editor Ester G. Dipasupil
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6 Pasay policemen face kidnap raps

NBI rescues victim at drug rehab center in Tagaytay

By Tina G. Santos

TEN PEOPLE, INCLUDING SIX PASAY CITY policemen, are facing charges for allegedly kidnapping a businessman in Pasay City early this month.

Lawyer Oscar Embido of the NBI Anti-Organized Crime Division said agents rescued the victim—Ricky Bola, 36, owner of Hardwick Restaurant located on Gil Puyat Avenue, Pasay City—from Gaudencia Homes Foundation Inc., a private drug rehabilitation center in Barangay Maitim II, Tagaytay City, last week.

Charges of kidnapping with serious illegal detention are being readied against Chief Insp. Abel Ocampo and five other still unidentified members of the Pasay Police.

Also facing charges are Dave Angeles, owner of the rehabilitation center and the victim's three siblings who allegedly masterminded the abduction, Embido told reporters.

Witnesses

An investigation showed that the six policemen forcibly dragged Bola into an L300 van last Aug. 7. The incident was witnessed by two of the victim's employees, according to the NBI.

Two days later, the victim's eldest sister decided to seek the help of the NBI after learning that Bola had been taken to the rehabilitation center for alleged drug abuse.

Bola later told authorities that during his confinement at the center, he learned that three of his siblings were behind his kidnapping because they wanted to take over his restaurant. Angeles, on the other hand, claimed that the victim was turned over to him by the Pasay City Police for being a drug dependent. But he failed to show documents to justify the victim's confinement at his rehabilitation center.

Court order

"The victim cannot be confined in a rehabilitation center against his will. There should at least be a court order," Embido explained, adding that they learned that the center was paid P20,000 for Bola's stay.

It was also gathered that Gaudencia Homes Foundation Inc. had not been accredited as a drug rehabilitation facility by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency.

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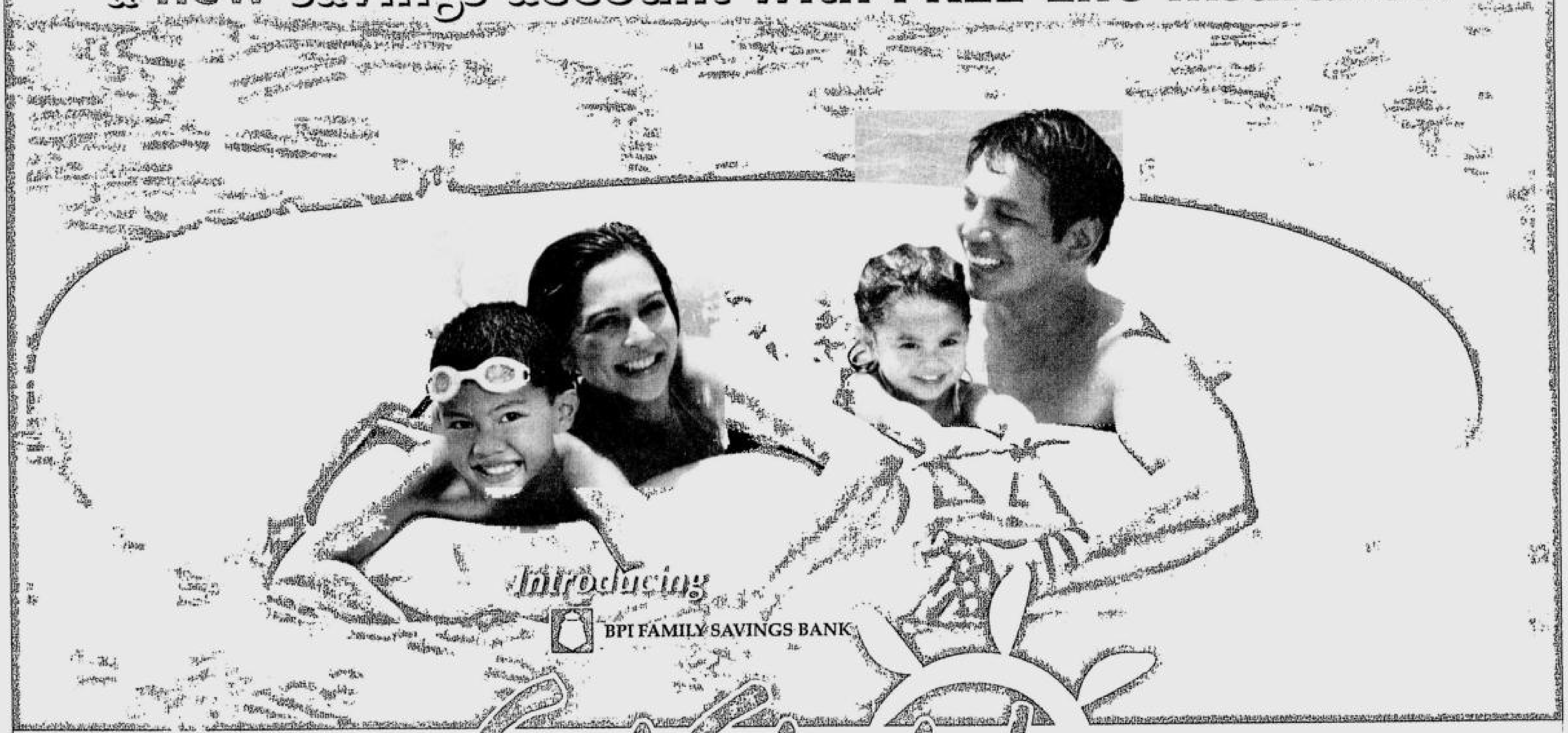

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Thumbs down for Wack Wack billboard

DID YOU KNOW

ON AUG. 30, 1896, hundreds of Katipuneros attacked a Spanish gunpowder depot in what is now known as the municipality of San Juan. It was the first encounter between members of the secret society Katipunan and the Spanish *guardia civil*. Filipinos, however, suffered a big defeat in what was later called the Battle of Pinaglabanan, with 153 killed and many more arrested. Among those captured were Katipuneros Captain Sancho Valenzuela, Eugenio Silvestre, Modesto Sarmiento and Ramon Peralta. A few days later, on Sept. 4, the revolutionaries were executed at Bagumbayan (now Rizal Park). *Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

FOLLOWING THE COLLAPSE OF A giant billboard in Mandaluyong City almost two weeks ago, Mayor Neptali Gonzales II quickly announced a plan to pass an ordinance regulating the sizes of billboards to be put up in the city.

But why is his office allowing the construction of a proposed 80-foot tall billboard on the southbound lane of Edsa in Barangay Wack-Wack, local officials asked yesterday.

"The proposed billboard is too big and would be very dangerous to pedestrians and motorists," barangay *kagawad* Errol Wilfred Zshornack told the INQUIRER.

Barangay officials had refused to grant a clearance for the construction of the billboard several times last year. The company who wanted to put up the ad—BC Manila—then went to City Hall where it was given a permit by the Office of the Building Official two months ago.

Wack-Wack officials only learned that City Hall had already approved the ad when they saw that construction on the proposed billboard had already begun on a vacant lot between Star Mall and the still empty Highway 54 Mall on the southbound lane along Edsa.

Sought for comment, Mayor Neptali Gonzales II said that if the city engineer had granted the company a permit, it just meant that the company had complied with the requirements.

"I am sure the city engineer, in granting a permit for the construction of the billboard, followed the National Building Code and our local ordinances," Gonzales told the INQUIRER.

But barangay officials said they would question the proposed billboard. Once in place, the billboard would be more than three times bigger than the one which fell on the roof of the Metro Rail Transit-3 Boni Station two weeks ago, the officials said.

The proposed billboard would also be set up beside an electrical company sub-station.

In opposing the construction of the billboard, Wack-Wack officials cited their own ordinance regulating billboards, probably the first for a local government unit in the country, Zshornack claimed.

The barangay ordinance passed exactly two years ago not only regulates the sizes but also the contents of billboards in the barangay, which has jurisdiction over the stretch of Edsa from the corner of Connecticut to Shaw Boulevard as well as parts of the Ortigas Center.

Zshornack said the proposed giant billboard would violate the barangay ordinance which stated that "no billboard shall exceed 30-sq m in total surface display area."

MIXED REACTIONS
A boy cries upon seeing a syringe (top) while another shows stoic resignation as he receives an injection. The two were among over 5,000 children in Mandaluyong City who received free vaccines yesterday to protect them from diseases. PHOTOS BY RAFFY LERMA

No treats await this Dutchman

By Tina G. Santos

A 42-YEAR-OLD DUTCH MAN CLAIMING TO be a retired general of the Armed Forces of Netherlands was arrested by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) for failing to settle P300,000 in unpaid hotel bills.

Charged with estafa in the Makati City Prosecutors Office was Jean Pierre de Bruijn, who was billeted at the City Garden Hotel on Makati Avenue.

An investigation showed that the suspect had deposited P10,000 as down payment when he checked into the hotel on June 11.

On Aug. 3, the hotel management sent De Bruijn a letter informing him that his bills had reached P244,000. After one week, another-bill, this time for P280,000, was sent to him.

The hotel management found out one week later that De Bruijn had already left without settling his bills which, by then, already totaled P304,000. They promptly asked the NBI to help them look for him.

NBI National Capital Region executive officer Rommel Vallejo said they later found the suspect in the house of his Filipino girlfriend on Anahaw Street in Comembo, Makati City.

A check with the Bureau of Immigration showed that the suspect had no travel records, Vallejo added.

METROBRIEFS

Binay dares Gonzalez

DO A FIGURATIVE Oblation Run. Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay yesterday hurled this challenge at Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and President Macapagal-Arroyo's allies in Congress after Gonzalez described the University of the Philippines as a "breeding ground" for destabilizers and for men and women running around the campus naked. "It is not the whimsical and naughty activity that some would portray it to be, for it started as a protest move and espouses an issue or advocacy every year thereafter," Binay said in a letter to Gonzalez. He added that he wished the members and allies of Ms Arroyo's administration could do a "figurative" Oblation Run around the country to prove that they have nothing to hide. "But then again, I have to admit that this may be too much of wishful thinking on my part," Binay said. *Jocelyn R. Uy*

Transport leader buried

AMBROCIO Paler Jr., a transport leader gunned down by still unidentified suspects in Pasay City last week, was laid to rest yesterday at the Sarhento Mariano Cemetery in the city. His fellow jeepney drivers and comrades from the social democratic movement, Aksyon Sambayanan (Aksa) asked the police to go after his killers. Paler, the president of the Samahan ng mga Operator-Drivers ng Jeepney Biyaheng Evangelista Libertad Inc. was shot dead on Aug. 22 while plying his route. His family and Sodjebel members believe that he may have been killed because of his campaign against unregistered jeepneys.

Book fair opens tomorrow

SENATORS Franklin Drilon and Richard Gordon, Commission on Higher Education chair Carlito Puno, and Education Secretary Jesli Lapus will attend the opening of the 27th Manila International Book Fair tomorrow. The event, set at the World Trade Center on Gil Puyat corner Roxas Boulevard in Pasay City, will be the venue for the Gintong Aklat Awards and the Manila Critics Circle's National Book Awards, two of the most awaited events in the local publishing and literary scene. New titles will be launched at the book fair. There will also be book signings, film showing, storytelling sessions, workshops and quiz shows.

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Chairman, Board of Trustees
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Though Robert already sold Chowking Food Corporation to Jollibee, he remains to be Mr. Chowking in the business circle and the famous Entrepreneur Who Broke Traditions in Tsinoy.com website. Now he is keeping a low profile overseeing things at the St. Luke's Medical Center.

Creating the Philippines' National Competitive Advantage

RESOURCE SPEAKER
Marife B. Zamora
Country General Manager & VP, Convergys Corp.

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DNA tests prompt dropping of charges in Ramsey case

BOULDER, COLO.—THE CASE AGAINST John M. Karr in the 1996 murder of 6-year-old Jon Benet Ramsey collapsed on Monday when DNA tests refuted Karr's claims that he had committed the crime.

The announcement by the Boulder district attorney, Mary T. Lacy, incited a storm of questions about why Karr, 41, had been believed in his admissions, and how he could have led prosecutors into what became an elaborate global farce. Hordes of reporters had tracked Karr's journey, from his apprehension in Thailand nearly two weeks ago to his return to the United States.

In a motion asking a judge to dismiss the arrest warrant, Lacy wrote that Karr's obsession with the case and its details, combined with his own statement of guilt, had compelled her to act first and test later. But in the end, she said, his words were all there was.

"No evidence has developed, other than his own repeated admissions, to place Mr. Karr at the scene of the crime," she wrote. "Mr. Karr was not the source of the DNA found in the underwear of JonBenet Ramsey." *New York Times News Service*

WORLDBRIEFS

Nepal floods kill 31

KATHMANDU—Helicopters ferried people to higher ground in flood-devastated western Nepal after rains left at least 31 people dead, 63 missing and displaced tens of thousands, officials and media said Tuesday. The government ordered local officials to accelerate rescue operations after the rains triggered massive landslides in the mountainous regions and flooding on the plains of west Nepal. Army helicopters flying rescue missions carried stranded people away from fast-flowing floodwaters to safer areas, state-run television showed. *AFP*

Minibus plunges in India

NEW DELHI—A packed minibus plunged into reservoir in southern India on Tuesday, killing 26 people heading out for a picnic, a news agency reported. The accident occurred as the minibus headed for the Almatti dam in the state of Karnataka, the Press Trust of India news agency said, quoting district officials. Six others in the vehicle managed to swim to shore, PTI said. *AP*

18 killed in Afghan blasts

KANDAHAR—A suicide bomber in a car struck a Nato-Afghan military convoy Tuesday, killing one civilian and wounding two others, a day after a bomb at a market left 17 civilians dead and 47 wounded, officials said. Tuesday's bomber hit the convoy on the main road linking Kandahar with the city's airport, said. Col. Sher Shah, who was in the convoy. No Nato soldiers were injured, he said. The civilian driving near the convoy died in the blast, while another civilian and an Afghan soldier were wounded, Shah said, adding that the bodies of the civilian and the bomber lay on the road. *AP*

Sharon's condition improves

JERUSALEM—Ex-Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon, who has been in a deep coma for nearly eight months, was transferred from intensive care Tuesday after his condition improved, the hospital treating him said. "Mr. Sharon is no longer suffering from pneumonia and his kidneys have started to function again," said Anat Dolev, a spokesperson for the Tel Hashomer hospital in Tel Aviv. She said the 78-year-old former premier was transferred out of the intensive care unit back to the respiratory rehabilitation department. *AFP*

Shiite militia, troops clash

DIWANIYA, Iraq—At least 20 Iraqi soldiers were killed in street fighting with Shi'ite militiamen in the town of Diwaniya on Monday, some of the bloodiest clashes yet among rival powers in Shi'ite southern Iraq. A Polish helicopter was hit by gunfire as it provided air support to Iraqi troops but landed safely. US aircraft also took part and US-led foreign troops sealed off the city before calm returned by nightfall after talks among Shi'ite leaders. Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki has vowed to disarm all militias, including those of fellow Shiite Islamists with seats in the coalition cabinet. *Reuters*

Iran dismisses US threat of sanctions coalition

TEHRAN—IRAN SAID ON MONDAY A US threat to form an independent coalition to impose sanctions if the UN Security Council failed to act over Tehran's nuclear program was an insult to the world body.

The Los Angeles Times said on Saturday the US ambassador to the United Nations, John Bolton, had indicated Washington was prepared to act independently with close allies to freeze Iranian assets and restrict trade if the council did not do so.

Washington has previously called for a swift response if Iran does not heed the Security Council's Thursday deadline to halt uranium enrichment, a process that can make fuel for reactors or material for warheads.

"These remarks (by Bolton) are an obvious insult to the Security Council," Iranian government spokesperson Gholamhossein Elham told a weekly news conference. "These remarks are just bullying and baseless remarks and show that they (the U.S.) are not competent to be a member of the Security Council."

The Los Angeles Times said Washington planned to introduce a resolution imposing penalties soon after the Aug. 31 deadline if the Islamic Republic's position did not change.

Iran has shown no sign that it will halt enrichment, a process the West says Iran is using to build atomic bombs. Iran denies the charge, saying it wants only to generate electricity.

"The road that we have taken is irreversible," Iran's chief nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani was quoted by state television as saying. "Iran intends to produce the nuclear fuel that it is going to use." Analysts say opposition from veto-wielding powers Russia and China, big trade partners of Iran who see no imminent threat to peace from Tehran, could delay a move towards sanctions.

Bolton, clarifying his position, told reporters on Monday

"You can envision sanctions being imposed outside of the Security Council as the United States has unilaterally imposed sanctions on Iran ... and other governments can do the same.

"So the question of what to do about Iran is certainly not confined to the Security Council," he said.

The United States has had broad restrictions on almost all trade with Iran since 1987.

Some political analysts believe a US attempt to further isolate Iran outside the United Nations would betray a lack of international support for its approach. *Reuters*

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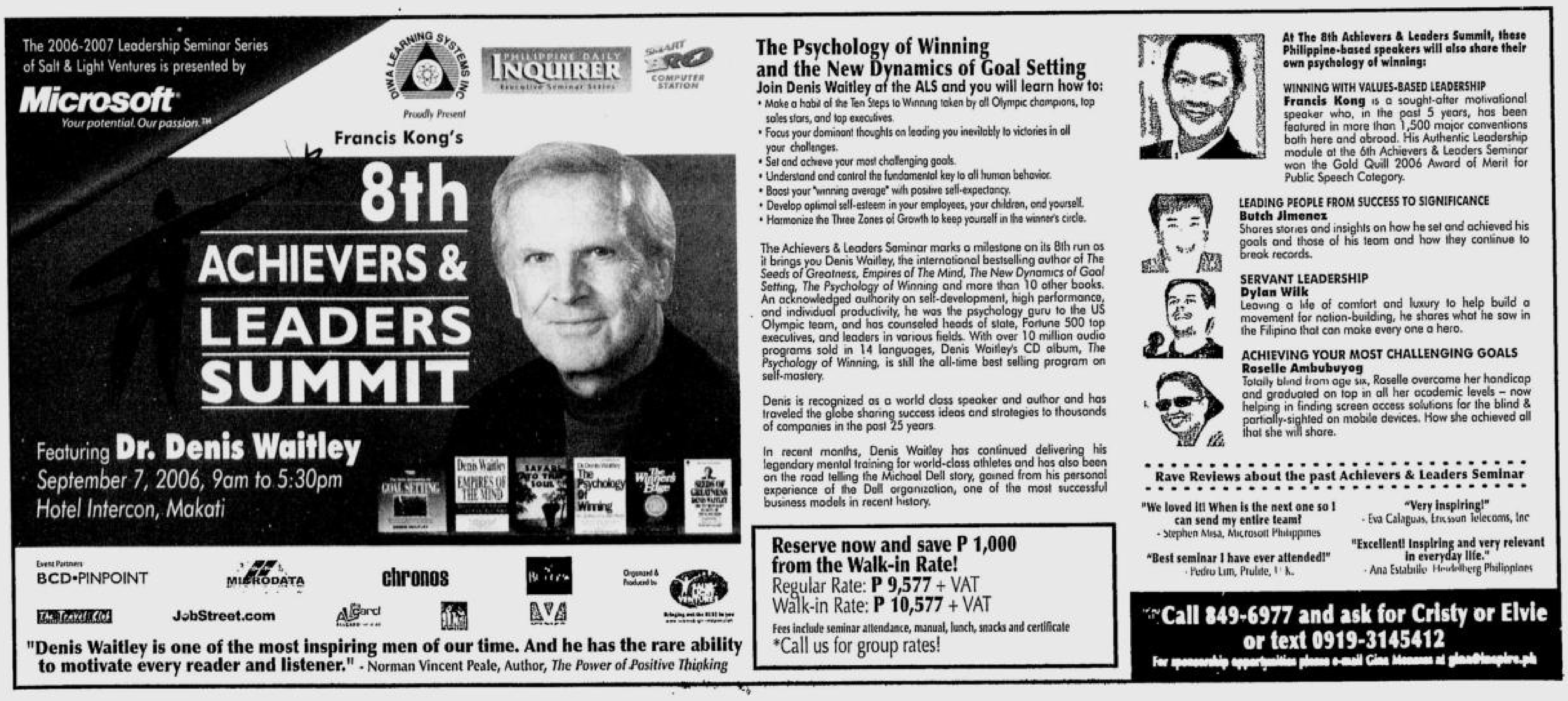
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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Israel probes conduct of Lebanon war

HAIFA, ISRAEL—ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER Ehud Olmert on Monday ordered a government inquiry into the conduct of Lebanon war, for the first time admitting failures during the month-long offensive on Hezbollah.

But the embattled premier refused to back calls for the most sweeping type of public inquiry—a state commission—which he said would paralyze the leadership at a time when Israel needed to be prepare for a threat from Iran.

"My government will name a commission... that will be charged with examining the conduct of the government," Olmert declared in the northern city of Haifa, which endured multiple deadly Hezbollah rocket attacks.

He announced that the government commission—over which the increasingly unpopular Olmert would have far more control than a state inquiry—will be headed by Nahum Admoni, a former chief of Israel's notorious Mossad spy agency.

OLMERT REUTERS

Olmert, whose fledgling three-month government has faced massive criticism for perceived mismanagement, military inefficiency and lack of war-time readiness, confessed to "problems and failures." "We did not always achieve the aims we hoped for. Not everything worked properly. There were problems and failures," he told what was a conference of Israeli mayors. The offensive left 160 Israelis dead, but failed in its aims of recovering soldiers captured by Hezbollah and stopping the Shiite militia from firing rockets into Israel.

"We have suffered severe losses.... We have not succeeded in stopping the Katyushas (Hezbollah rocket attacks)... and moreover we have not returned the captured soldiers," said Olmert.

The prime minister nonetheless vowed no effort would be spared to return Eldad Regev anbd Ehud Goldwasser, whose capture in a deadly cross-border raid by Shiite militia Hezbollah on July 12, sparked the massive assault in Lebanon.

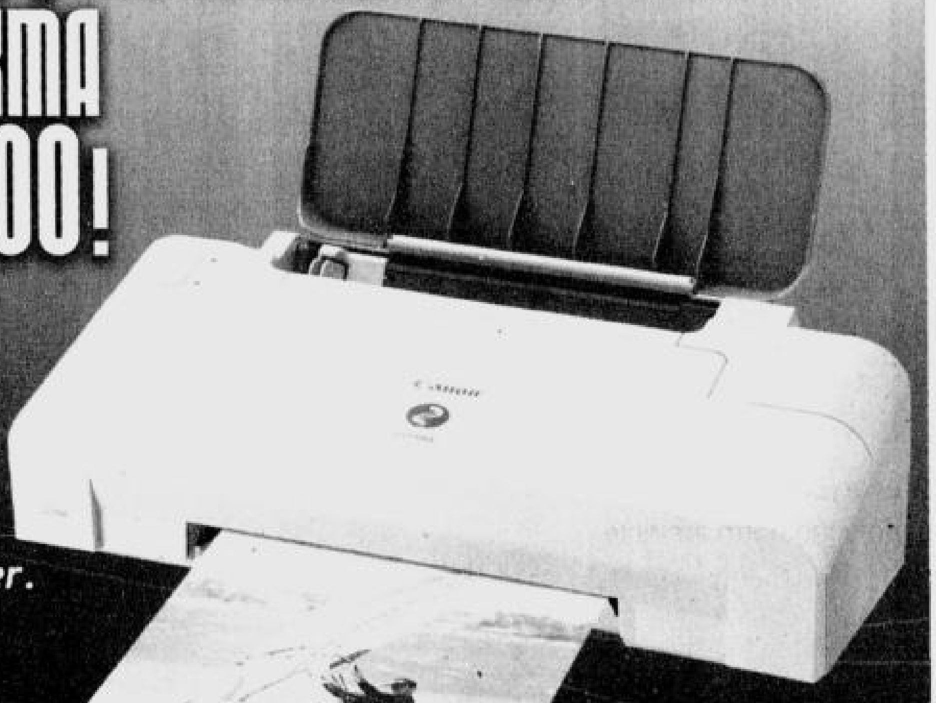
The raid and a subsequent botched Israeli rescue mission left eight Israeli soldiers dead.

"There is real, honest criticism from the heart of reserve soldiers, of citizens... I hear them and I respect them and what they have to say. There are some things that they are right in and some things that I disagree with." Yet he said a state commission, which would be chaired by a judge and would have the authority to subpoena witnesses, was not what the country needed as it would "totally paralyze" the political and military leadership.

Reports in the Israeli media citing unnamed senior Olmert aides, had widely predicted that the premier would back a governmental inquiry rather than a state commission because it would reach conclusions more quickly.

State commissions were established in the aftermath of the 1973 Yom Kippur War and after the massacres at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon after Israel's major invasion in 1982.

But Olmert warned that Israel needed to be ready to face the threat from Tehran, following warnings from another minister earlier this month that the Jewish state needed to prepare for a ballistic missile threat from Iran. *AFP*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Safety device may have prevented Kentucky crash

LEXINGTON, KY.—AN ON-BOARD WARNING system already in use in hundreds of airplanes might have prevented the crash of a plane that killed 49 people after the plane took off from the wrong runway here on Sunday.

But the system is not used in smaller regional planes, the warning system's manufacturer said. Consequently, the CRJ-100 built by Bombarbier Aerospace of Canada and operated by Comair was not equipped with the warning system.

The warning system announces, in a mechanical voice, which runway the plane has entered. If the runway is too short for the plane, as it was in Sunday's crash of Comair Flight 5191 to Atlanta, the system announces how many feet of runway remain.

"It doesn't tell you what to do," said Robert T. Francis, a former vice chair of the National Transportation Safety Board. "It just makes you aware of where you are and how much runway you have left."

A preliminary investigation of the Comair crash suggests that the pilots did not know they had turned onto the shorter of two runways at Blue Grass Airport, at least not until it was too late. In recordings of communications between the crew and the control tower, the only runway mentioned is Runway 22, although the plane took off from Runway 26, which is only about half as long, said Debbie Hersman, a member of the National Transportation Safety Board.

Francis, the former safety board official, said the warning system, called the Runway Awareness and Alerting System, gives an errant pilot three different cues. It has been bought by Alaska Airlines, Air France, FedEx, Lufthansa and Malaysia Airlines, but not by any regional carriers, according to the manufacturer, Honeywell Aerospace.

As the experts tried to reconstruct what happened in the moments after Flight 5191 took off about 6:05 a.m. and appeared to strike an 8-foot metal fence, the victims' families and friends struggled to comprehend their loss.

The crash killed, among others, a Habitat for Humanity board member on his way to mark the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, a racehorse owner flying early so as not to miss his granddaughter's fourth birthday party, and a small-town couple who married Saturday night and had arisen early Sunday to start their honeymoon. *NY Times News Service*

Mexican court junks fraud claims

MEXICO CITY—MEXICO'S TOP ELECTORAL court threw out allegations of massive fraud in last month's presidential election on Monday, handing almost certain victory to conservative candidate Felipe Calderon.

The seven judges voted unanimously to reject almost all the legal complaints by left-wing candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, who said he was robbed of victory in the July 2 vote.

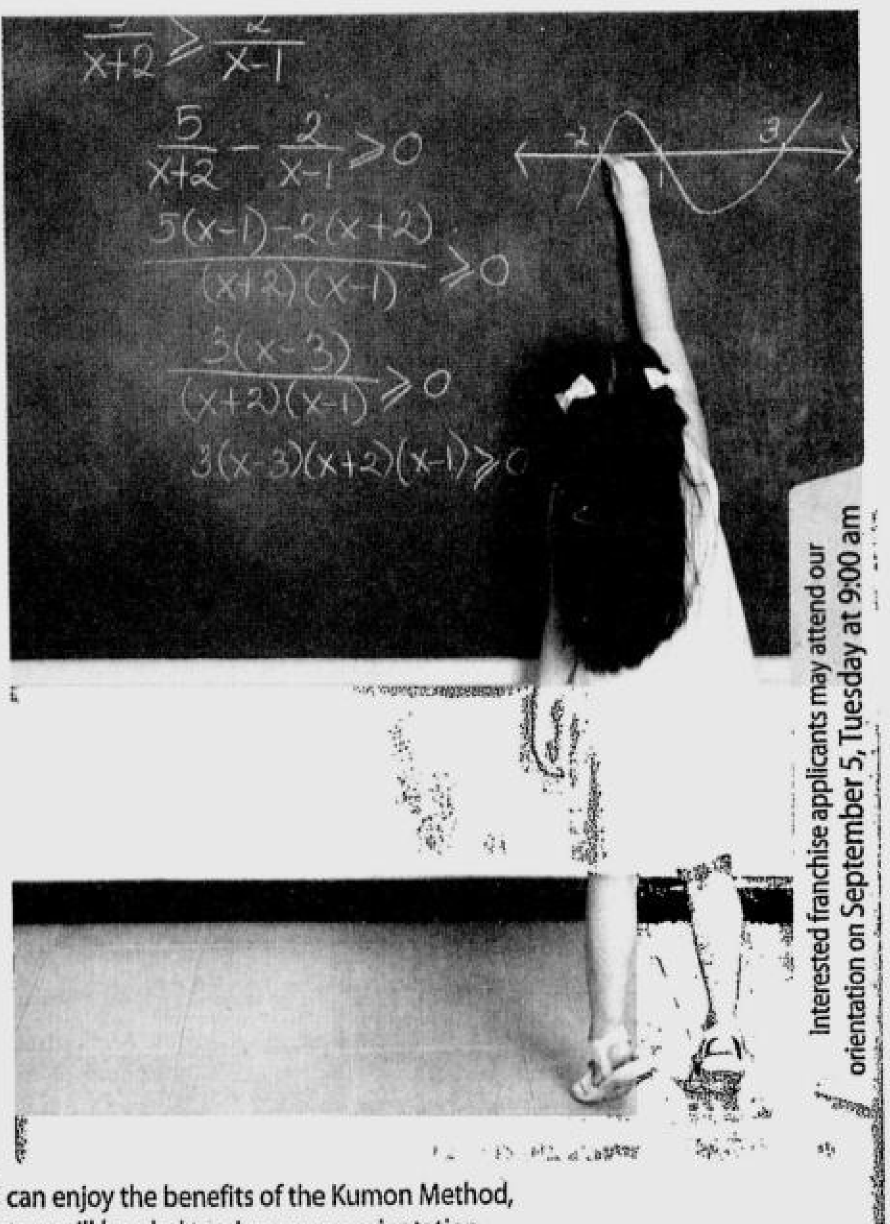
The leftist, who has vowed to make Mexico ungovernable if Calderon becomes president, refused to accept the ruling.

The court stopped short of formally naming Calderon the winner, but reported only marginal changes after examining the results of a partial recount and throwing out more than 230,000 ballots because of voting irregularities.

Calderon vowed not to let protests rattle his victory.

"I won't let something that's been decided by all the citizens be undermined by a few in a violent way," he said.

The initial result showed Calderon, a former energy minister from the ruling National Action Party, won the election by 244,000 votes, or just 0.58 of a percentage point. *Reuters*


Equip her to solve the challenges of life.

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It's about acquiring good learning habits and the desire to advance quickly. It's about setting clear goals and accomplishing them. And it's about gaining the discipline and skills vital to a lifetime of learning.

Schools today bear witness to the abilities displayed by the Kumon student. She is not intimidated by complicated equations or extensive reading materials. Her training with the Kumon Method helps her tackle challenges with focus and determination rarely found in others her age. She is confident, competent, and simply ahead of her pack.

Now on its 10th year in the Philippines, Kumon's Math and Reading programs are helping more and more children learn skills vital to overcoming the challenges of life.

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KUMON

Austrian teen describes years of captivity

PARIS—NATASCHA KAMPUSCH ON MONday was heard from publicly for the first time since she escaped last week after spending eight years of her childhood incarcerated in a basement cell outside Vienna, Austria.

In a handwritten statement read to journalists by a psychologist made available to her by the Austrian government, Kampusch, 18, gave a scant, matter-of-fact account of her everyday life in captivity, spoke of a psychological standoff with her captor, and asked the public to wait until she was ready to talk more directly about her ordeal.

Her words, and the tale of how she got away from the man who seized her when she was 10, hinted at an intelligent, articulate young woman who managed somehow to educate herself and maintain a sense of optimism despite her isolation.

She seized her chance to flee on Wednesday when her captor told her to vacuum his car. When he walked off to escape the noise of the vacuum cleaner and make a cell phone call, she said, she slipped away.

She left the vacuum cleaner running to fool him into thinking she was still there, she said in her letter.

After a brief meeting with her parents last week, Kampusch said she was not yet ready to spend more time with them and had decided to remain in an undisclosed location for now, shielded by psychiatrists and lawyers.

She had her first contact with other teenagers over the weekend, said the Austrian authorities, who have made support services available. The meeting went smoothly, people who are helping to care for her have told the local news media. *New York Times News Service*

WHAT'S INSIDE

Spain rips Lithuania, books semifinal spot /A24

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SPORTS

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

Text us your feedback: inquirer sprt name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Agassi hangs on, outlasts Romanian foe /A25

RP five in limbo despite unity pact

Key Fiba group nixes immediate lifting of ban

By Musong R. Castillo
and Marc Anthony Reyes

THE NATIONAL TEAM TASKED to regain Asian basketball glory has ceased preparations pending the final resolution on the Philippines' suspension from Fiba-sanctioned international tournaments.

REYES: Stops training

EALA: Tough call

The start of the 2006 PBA Philippine Cup pre-season tournament this Friday has also gotten in the way, and the coaching staff, headed by Chot Reyes, has called off everything even after the San Miguel-RP Team's successful title defense of the Shell Rimula Cup in Brunei recently.

The ban on Philippine participation in Fiba tournaments will be lifted only after the Basketball Association of the Philippines and rival Pilipinas Basketball have completed their unification in a period of one month.

A special commission made up of top Fiba officials yesterday welcomed the unity pact forged by the BAP and PB—but the policy-making Fiba Central Board refused to bring the country back into the fold just yet.

It is still unknown if Reyes can still call the shots for the RP team, now that he has accepted the head coaching job at San Miguel Beer.

Ask Eala instead

A San Miguel official declined comment on this matter, and told the INQUIRER to ask PBA commissioner Noli Eala instead.

Eala, who was in Japan on Sunday as part of the group that lobbied Fiba on behalf of the PB, has not returned calls nor answered text messages.

The schedule of the Philippine Cup will also have to be altered if the PBA decides to honor its commitment to the national team. The Asiad, scheduled in Doha, Qatar, from Dec. 1-15, will be held during the PBA tourney's elimination round.

In a decision issued from Tokyo, the Central Board said it will only lift the suspension on the Philippines after all the Fiba commission's requirements for both local groups have been met.

Among the preconditions are the formulation, by the unified BAP-PB group, of a new constitution and bylaws, the election of the new group's officers and—according to a source close to both parties—the renaming of the BAP.

The commission, made up of past and present top Fiba officials, including Carl Ching Menky, Bob Elphinston, Borislav Stankovic, Patrick Baumann and Dato Yeoh Choo Hock, asked the Central Board to authorize Baumann to "immediately lift the suspension" by Sept. 30 or earlier.

Until such time, both the BAP and the PB have agreed to form a unified body and complete its mandated tasks.

Unification in 30 days

The new group's moves will be monitored by Elphinston, the incoming Fiba president; Fiba-Asia chief Dato Yeoh, and Baumann.

"The Commission expresses its satisfaction that a solution is found for the good of Filipino basketball, by which all sides have made important concessions to unify basketball under one structure within 30 days," said the letter with Fiba letterhead. It was faxed by POC first vice president Monico Puentevella.

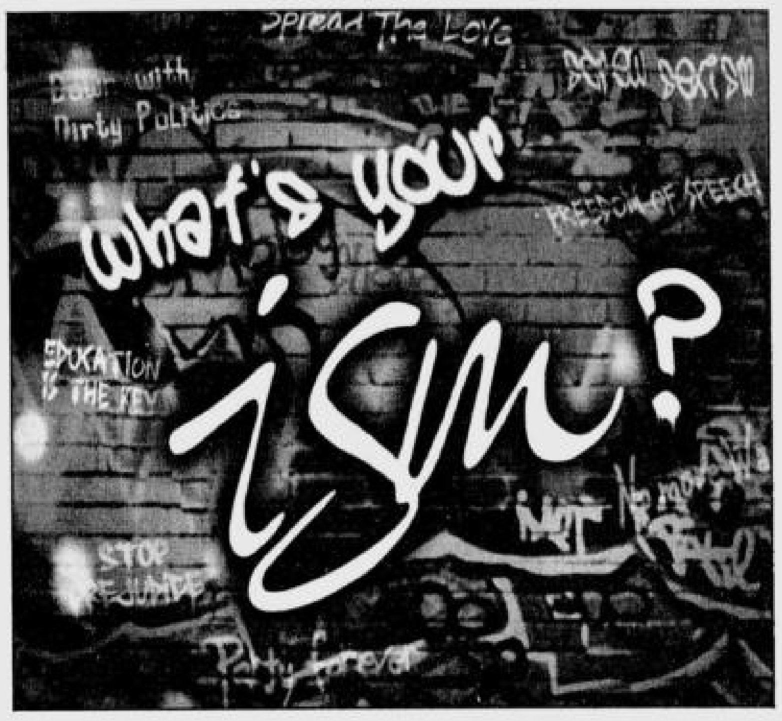
Puentevella, who also attended the series of marathon meetings in Tokyo, said they have one month to work on it and make a fresh start.

"It took us one whole day among ourselves (with BAP officials led by Joey Lina) and five hours with Fiba to reach this important decision," said Puentevella. "Let us not waste it."

THE ES-SCENTS OF EVERY MAN

Going Against the Flow

Do you enjoy doing things for a cause…like giving a free strip show? Or perhaps you love to love because you've discovered that it hurts…real good? Or maybe you have a strong belief that men should always *come* first?



Quirks. Every man has it. But not everyone has the guts to show it. Only those who dare to defy the norm are able to let their true character surface. A character that defines the very essence of a man. A character that reveals a man's ISM.

What's an ISM?

An ISM is a personal movement, a person's definitive core. It is a representation of ideals, beliefs, aspirations, a personal stand on issues about life and society.

An ISM is an intelligent expression of a person's uniqueness, a fulfillment of one's need to stand out, rather than conform to what has already been established by society.

ism
HUIT
PARIS

Huit-ism *n.*
A state wherein men of power and confidence find a renewed passion for living

An ISM is an acquired taste and an art—an expression of individuality. It is open-minded and free-spirited but is never without sophistication.

What's your ISM?

As a celebration of individuality and free expression, three new fragrances have been formulated specifically for the go-getting, confident, and artistic mavericks, namely, Huit, Miro, and Deauville. Each fragrance embodies individual traits and characteristics of every unique man.

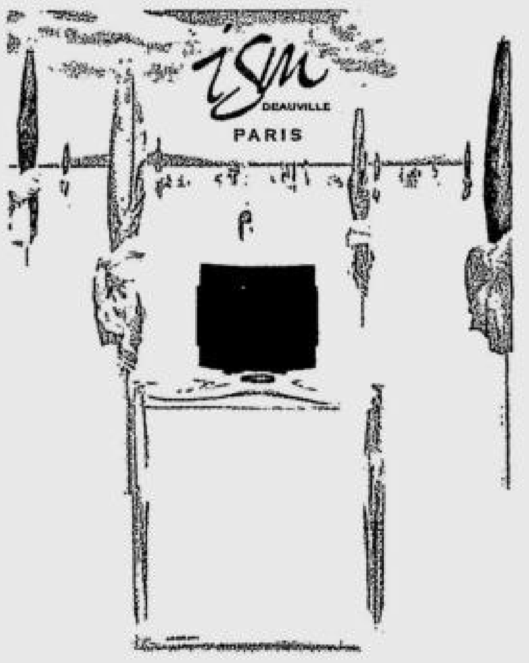
Huit, which means eight in French, symbolizes full-embodiment. A precious and rich fragrance with fresh spicy notes of grapefruit, bergamot, nutmeg, baie rose, jasmine, cedar wood, and sandalwood, Huit appeals to the accomplished, confident, highly-educated man who possesses power and a decisive attitude.

ism
MIRO
PARIS

Miro-ism *n.*
A state wherein one inspires creativity through free expression, dynamism, and the arts

Inspired by the Spanish surrealist painter, Joan Miro, Miro is reminiscent of the aroma of freshly cut wood and radiant energy. With notes of lemon, bergamot, tangerine, lavender, violet, galbanum, cedar wood, vetiver, and moss, Miro appeals to the gregarious trendsetter and fashion icon.

Derived from the posh city of Deauville in the northern part of France, Deauville is the freshest of the three eau extremes. Light and clean, Deauville is a blend of bergamot, tangerine, tea, cedar wood, and musk. This delicate fragrance appeals to the man who values simplicity, cleanliness, neatness, innocence, and purity.



Deauville-ism *n.*
A refreshed state wherein one inspires beauty through purity, innocence, and freshness

ISM is made in France by the House of Charabot, the 200-year-old perfumery house with a legendary reputation for producing the most prized fragrances in the world. Carefully blended using the finest raw ingredients from the world's fragrance capital, Grasse in France, ISM is the unique fragrance made for the unique man. And you can find one at any Rustan's Essenses outlet.

PETRON
XTRA
UNLEADED
Go for the Xtra miles.
1114 km
The record has been broken.
1400* KM
It's time you set your own record.
PETRON
Fuel Success.

Team Zayco Hermanos drove a total of 1,400.4 kms. beating the 1,114 km. record set by Pocholo Ramirez on one full tank of Petron Xtra Unleaded.

*The Car Awards Group, Inc. and the Automobile Association Philippines are the official observers of the Petron Xtra Mile Challenge. Team Zayco Hermanos used a 1300 automatic transmission [illegible]

Where was Solar when Bata/Django won?

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

WHAT A WASTE IT HAS BEEN, what a bum mood local TV impresarios were in.

No way could any self-respecting Pinoy sports fan be singing yesterday.

There was this feeling they had been jilted.

You feel low, your friends and neighbors sulk and feel even poorer.

We all missed partaking in the delight and joy as Efren "Bata" Reyes and Django Bustamante combined magnificently to humble the USA Team and win the World Cup of Pool in Newport, Wales.

Oh, what a feeling it could've been if the title event, played thousand of miles away, were brought to Filipino homes through the magic of modern communication.

* * *

Had the championship battle been carried on national television, there would have been wide-eyed talk about the great Filipino duo in the marketplace yesterday morning.

Sorry, the favorite topic was still Manny Pacquiao and his seemingly diminished chances against Erik Morales in their third encounter this November.

We were all there awake and cheering close to dawn when Bata Reyes fought gallantly to bag the Cardiff World Pool Championship in July 1999.

We were again teary-eyed as peppery Pinoy Alex Pagulayan, although carrying the Canadian flag, topped the WPC series in Taipei in June 2004.

Yes, all those who cared to be reassured about the golden gifts of the Pinoy were aptly rewarded, through the magic of television, by those unforgettable victories.

* * *

Somebody goofed who had allowed this historic win by Bata and Django slip practically unnoticed by the *masa*.

In fact, not a few friends we talked to were unaware of the World Cup series.

"You mean Bata and Django won it, all I saw on TV was Bata losing to a lady in Taipei," said Carding Reyes of Vergara, Mandaluyong.

He was not alone. Many jeepney drivers, who relied mainly on television for news and entertainment, were amazed to learn that Bata and Django had gone all the way to the championship.

What made the non-coverage truly regretful were reports that Bata, in winning this big one, had essayed rare magical shots he had not taken in his past championships.

Now, everybody was left wondering what memorable magic Bata had worked in Wales.

* * *

You see, billiards, above all, is a great television event.

Assorted heroics, several intangibles could escape the naked eye in televised physical contests like basketball, soccer, even boxing.

But not in pool, where the problems and their sharp solutions are laid out there for everybody to see and appreciate—even without the aid of replays.

Anyway, what could have made the RP win doubly thrilling was the fact that it was the boorish Earl Strickland (take a bow, Ed Picson), definitely no friend of Pinoy pool fans, who was the other man in the humbled, vanquished US Team.

Not to be vengeful, not to rub salt on American wound, but there was this report of Bata converting with a one-hand shot to the great shame and displeasure of Strickland.

* * *

There was high drama for the Pinoy, but there will never be another day like it.

We are all at the mercy of TV moguls, lapping up the endless commercials that come with big events.

Yes, beggars can't be choosers.

But the least we poor citizens, ruled by an evasive, questionable leadership, could pray for is for a replay of that great event in Wales.

Solar Sports, we've been told, has the right over PartyPoker.com events, including the World Cup of Pool.

Solar, indeed goofed, when it failed to offer this latest big one by the Pinoy on television.

Let's hope we don't get the replay over sports rival ABS-CBN instead.

AMA gets back at STI

LAST YEAR'S RUNNER-UP STI Colleges exacted revenge over AMA Computer University, 68-56, to boost its chances in the sixth National Athletic Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Naascu) men's basketball tournament at the UM gym.

Haddi Porto scattered 19 points for the Vic Ycasiano-mentored Olympians, who raised their record to nine wins in 11 matches.

AMA dropped to 8-3.

The win was also a fitting vindication for STI, which dropped a 78-82 decision to AMA in the first round of the elimination last July 29.

Dexter Micutuan, John Macalma and Francis Junatas added 29 points among them for the Olympians.

Chito Jaime carried the fight for the Titans with 15 points.

In the first game, New Era University defeated Centro Escolar University, 67-57.

New Era led, 67-57, with still 1:59 remaining when CEU walked out of the game in protest of the referees' call.

Joseph Perlas scored 13 points for the Hunters.

SPORTSWATCH

110 fights today in 'Rambulan' derby

THE FINALS OF THE "RAMBULAN 5-STAG DERBY" TAKES CENTER STAGE AT the San Juan Coliseum today with the first of 110 fights kicking off at 1 p.m. Among the frontrunners with two points apiece in the derby sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000 are E. Moralita (IBM Farms I and II), Frank and Peter Cabaddu (Mabuhay 4-cock), Leobeng Villarama (Marie Rose), M. Almada (Iloilo), Ato Custodio (Badlahi), Butch Nuñez (Stagfest Sa Pasig), James Uy (JU Monte A), Monching Tracy (Tracy III), Nono San Pablo (NSP), Louie Cua and Dorie Du (Oct. 21 Bugbugan SJC), Arman Santos (Jade Resort), Allan Chan (SJC 6-Stag Circuit) and Col. Del Mundo (Madonna). Participants with 0.5 and 1 point in the previous qualifying rounds will compete on Sept. 4.

Bates stagfest finals get going in Makati

THE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND OF THE "RL BATES 7-STAG DERBY" RESUMES today at the Makati Coliseum with more than 80 exciting fights lined up and with B-Meg Derby Ace as main backer. Leading the 68-entry field with three points each are 2005 World Slasher Cup champion Boy Marso (BMRR), boxing champ Manny Pacquiao and Jun Topacio (JT Diego Super Pacman II), Rudy Albano (Mulawin), Henry Villarica (VP Alegria) and J. Diokno (Tipakan RCD San Luis). "A participant has to hurdle four more fights, so it's still anybody's game," said host Richard Bates. Meanwhile, the Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) 5-stag derby series starts this Monday. For inquiries, call 896-3545 or 895-6475.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Red Fancy (4), Yapes Yoyoh (1), Marigold (6), Summer Rain (2)

Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Friendly Fire (4), Divine Diba/House Of Riches (3), Makati Haven (6), Sweet Akyssa (5)

Race 3—(Nico's Incharge (2), Sovereign Dancer (4), Silver Music (6), Madelline (5)

Race 4—(Qrt/Tri)—Man Power (7), Spanish Drums (6), Luck Of The Irish (1), Bull Rock'Exceptional Gem (4)

Race 5—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Now Showing (4), Rock Attack Attack (8), Dazzling Affair (9), Besame Mucho (1), Long Hitter (10), Western Dancer (12)

Race 6—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Gonfalon Story/Overture (7), Strong Boy (3), Remus/Celestial (4), Mutriara (2), Dashing (9)

Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Sandok (7), Bomb Shell (6), Brute Force (3), Pangako Sa'Yo (8), Manlngning (1)

Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Chacabana (8), Road Runner (2), Risk taker (5), Interceptor (7), Audrey's Temper (6), Silver Place (9)

Cards have revenge in mind as they battle red-hot Lions

THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT MAPUA could end up at No. 3 spot in the NCAA Final Four.

No matter how remote the Cardinals will be going for it, but first they have to lock horns with league leader San Beda today at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

If Mapua wins its last two games and things fall apart for third-running Philippine Christian University, it could muster a 9-5 record and wrest the No. 3 spot from the Dolphins whom they beat, 47-42, in the first round .

But that all depends on how the Cardinals carry themselves against the Red Lions who have not tasted defeat for the last 11 games and are well on their way to the No. 1 spot with a twice-to-beat incentive to boot.

"We are not losing faith, we have to keep on fighting," said Mapua coach Horacio Lim, whose charges are facing a grim scenario of again facing San Beda in the Final Four in a beat-twice task.

The top team takes on the No. 4 squad, while the No. 2 and No. 3 square off with the top two teams enjoying twice-to-beat advantage in the Final Four.

Last time around, the Red Lions mangled the Cardinals (69-55) through a well-executed slow break. That time, Nigerian exchange student Samuel Ekwe powered San Beda with 11 points, 13 rebounds and six blocks.

The 6-foot-8 Ekwe's intimidating presence, which allowed San Beda to outrebound Mapua, 57-38, will again be the Cardinals' main problem today.

San Sebastian and Jose Rizal try to play out their remaining games in the first match, hoping to avoid a last-place finish in the season that is about to end.

Marc Anthony Reyes

STANDINGS	W	L
*San Beda	11	1
*Letran	10	3
*PCU	9	4
*Mapua	7	5
SSC	4	8
Perpetual Help	4	9
Jose Rizal U	3	9
St. Benilde	2	11

**clinched semis berth*

GAMES TODAY

(Ninoy Aquino Stadium)

12 nn—San Sebastian vs JRU (jrs/srs)

4 p.m.—Mapua vs San Beda (srs)

Rookie Tan rules Quick 8 drag race

ROSARIO, BATANGAS—CHIEF ENGINEER and tuner Mato Tan of Matonetics stole the limelight from intense rivals Dave Jota of Blanche Racing and Jonathan Tiu of Team Ere as he ruled the Quick 8 division recently in the fifth and penultimate leg of the 2006 Red Horse National Drag Racing Championship at the Drag Strip of the Batangas Racing Circuit here.

It wasn't a record-breaking run but Tan's mastery of the trade and reputation in the local racing scene proved to be a big factor in clinching the win on his first try in the event.

Tan clocked 12.150 seconds to upstage the highly favored Jota who suffered car problems that caused him to slow down in the midst of their final showdown. Jao settled for runner-up honors with a time of 16.349.

Tiu, the other favorite in the Quick 8, also had problems with his car tune-up and was booted out by former karting champ Dino Jacinto of HP in the first round.

Tiu's car problem was evident in the Pro class division. Good thing, Tiu's rival Eric Reutillo of Kanzai Racing committed a red light violation that gave Tiu the outright victory with a clocking of 27.461.

Circuit racing champ Felix Perez of Alps Racing Team also won the resumed Pro class race, where he clocked 13.858 seconds to turn back Blanche Racing's Jason Ong (14.139 seconds).

The finals of the event sponsored by Red Horse Beer, San Miguel Corp. and supported by Pilipinas Shell, Denso, Yokohama, Casino Filipino and Sparco. is set Sept. 23.

For info, log on at www.batangasracingcircuit.com or contact BRC operations manager Rodini Rivera or Nelson Gayola at (632) 817-2241, 729-5365 or fax 815-1241.

HOUSTON Rockets superstar Tracy McGrady shoots hoops with eyes closed during an Adidas-organized meet-and-greet event for local NBA fans.

SPAIN'S Rudy Fernandez du

Spain ri books s

SAITAMA, JAPAN—PAU GA 25 points and nine rebounds used another impressive pe to beat Lithuania, 89-67, Tue vance to the World Champi nal four for the second time.

Juan Carlos Navarro added for Spain, 7-0, which finished 1982 in its only other semifin ance.

Spain came into the game w age margin of victory of 25 po led this game 76-49 with five play when the reserves took ov

Memphis Grizzlies center Gas to the game averaging 21 points bounds while shooting 65 perce field. He was 8-for-14 from the day and 9-for-12 from the free t

Darius Lavrinovic had 17 po Lithuania (4-3), which never from another one of Spain's one a 15-0 run that spanned t second quarters.

Lavrinovic scored down low left in the first quarter to brin

Government Warning: Cigarette sm

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nks to trigger the breakaway against Lithuania. AP

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with 3:53
Lithuania

within 17-11. Lithuania wouldn't score again for 5:33, missing eight shots and committing six turnovers as Spain turned up the defensive pressure and scored repeatedly on breakaway lay-ups and dunks.

Linas Kleiza, who plays for the Denver Nuggets, finally broke Lithuania's drought with a tip-in with 8:20 left in the first half, cutting Spain's lead to 32-13. Spain led 47-30 at halftime and opened the second half with a 7-0 run, forcing three turnovers in the first two minutes.

Navarro had four of Spain's five 3-pointers and Gasol was dominant inside as Spain pulled away to another easy win. The closest any team has come was Angola, which lost 93-83 in the opening round.

Spain finished with 17 steals and forced Lithuania into 28 turnovers, nine more than its average over the first six games.

Lithuania, a young team that wasn't given much of a chance at a medal entering the tournament, surprised Italy in the second round to reach the quarterfinals. *AP*

Agassi hangs on

Outlasts Romanian foe to stretch final tournament another day

NEW YORK—ANDRE AGASSI refused to go gently into the night in his final tournament by coming back to beat Andrei Pavel of Romania, 6-7 (4), 7-6 (8), 7-6 (6), 6-2, at the US Open on Monday.

Knowing each time he steps on the court could be his last match as a pro, Agassi kept overcoming deficits in his opening match and pushing his 36-year-old body around Arthur Ashe Stadium for 3 1/2 hours.

Most of the Open-record night session crowd of 23,736 were on their feet when Agassi's eyes welled up with tears as he served out the final point after midnight.

"You want it to be everything you hope it is," Agassi said. "It was perfect."

There were moments, though, when it looked as if Agassi would be bidding adieu for good. After he lost the first set, for example. And especially when he fell behind, 4-0, in the third set, causing his wife, former star Steffi Graf, to pace a bit.

"I thought," Pavel said, "'I have him.'"

Yet that's when Agassi found the energy and shots to reverse things. Coincidence or not, Agassi went on a five-game run shortly after motioning to his coach, Darren Cahill, to bring him some freshly strung rackets. It also was around that time that Pavel—a 32-year-old who hadn't played a hard-court match since March—was visited by a trainer.

ANDY Roddick lets out a scream after beating Florent Serra. AP

Agassi got to a third tiebreaker, then dominated the final set.

It was a fitting way to cap a day that celebrated three of the sport's most significant figures. Before Agassi's match, the US Tennis Association rededicated its facility, naming it the Billie Jean King National Tennis Center. And Jimmy Connors was on the scene, too, coaching Andy Roddick and soaking in the adoration.

Roddick began this year's last major by beating Florent Serra, 6-2, 6-1, 6-3, and joined four other past Open champions in the second round: Justine Henin-Hardenne, Lindsay Davenport, Svetlana Kuznetsova and, of course, Agassi—bad back, 9-7 record this year, and all.

Second-seeded Henin-Hardenne breezed past Maria Elena Camerin, 6-2, 6-1, No. 10-seeded Davenport defeated Klara Zakopalova, 6-1, 6-4, and No. 6 Kuznetsova beat Sandra Kloesel, 6-2, 2-6, 6-3.

Meanwhile, Feliciano Lopez ousted third-seeded Ivan Ljubicic, 6-3, 6-3 6-3, in the first big upset, a fate barely avoided by Agassi.

"I want to be here real bad, for the whole two weeks," Agassi said. "I really want to leave my best stuff on the court. I'm very proud of this day, and I'm glad it gets to happen again."

Next for Agassi is a match against eighth-seeded Marcos Baghdatis of Cyprus, a 21-year-old player who reached the Australian Open final and Wimbledon semifinals this year.

"Such a talent," Agassi said. "One of those guys you'd pay to go watch."

Agassi won the Open in 1994 and 1999, part of his collection of eight Grand Slam titles, and was the runner-up four times, including last year. When Agassi won that first US Open championship, his blond hair was long and tucked under a cap, his shirt was a loud purple, and he wore a pinkie ring and dangling earring. *AP*

AGASSI: Still in there AFP

WOODS AP

Lehman: US Ryder Cup players upbeat

STRAFFAN, IRELAND—US RYDER CUP CAPtain Tom Lehman reiterated his faith in Tiger Woods' commitment to the Ryder Cup after his team's first practice session at The K Club.

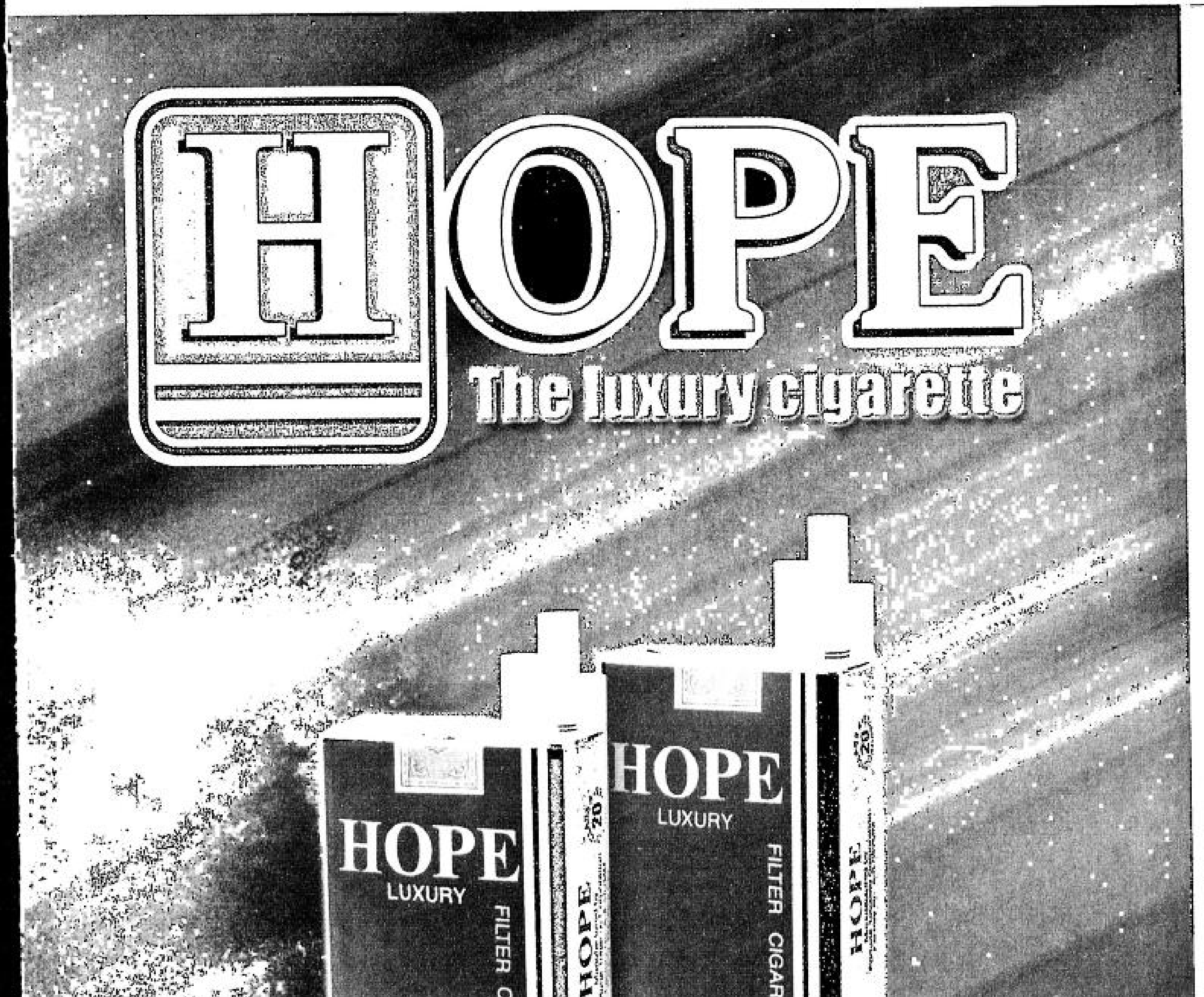
All 12 members of the US squad flew into Dublin early on Monday for a two-day team-building and played 18 holes in wet and windy conditions at next month's Ryder Cup venue.

"It's been cold, windy and rainy but good," Lehman said. "Tiger has won four in a row and everybody has been trying hard to get on the team and working hard on their games."

The two-day visit to Ireland has been designed by Lehman to familiarize his players with the course and build team spirit before they take on Europe from Sept. 22-24.

Woods and Phil Mickelson rearranged prior engagements to make the trip and Lehman stressed that the world No. 1's presence underlined his commitment to the Ryder Cup cause.

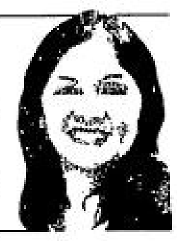
"People don't understand Tiger Woods," Lehman said. "There are few people in the golfing or maybe the sporting world more committed to winning than him." *Reuters*



Enjoy that great Hope freshness.

noking is dangerous to your health.

No light at tunnel's end



In Huddle

Beth Celis

CONTRARY TO EXPECTATIONS, the motley group that flew to Tokyo to seek the lifting of the Fiba ban is coming home empty-handed again, albeit filled with renewed optimism.

People awaiting word from Tokyo with bated breath were expecting a Fiba decision last Sunday, the day the Fiba Central Board was to tackle the matter of the Philippine suspension.

Phone lines burned from calls exchanged by the anxious media. Nobody knew what was happening in Tokyo. Had the ban been lifted? Was it going to be lifted?

This was the main concern of the basketball-loving nation.

No report came from any of the three parties that were in Japan—the BAP, the POC and Pilipinas Basketball. And no one in Manila could get in touch with anyone in Tokyo because of some telecom technical difficulties.

Only one dogged, persistent scribe who didn't mind spending thousands on overseas phone calls successfully reached BAP president Joey Lina around midnight of Sunday.

* * *

In a nutshell, Joey told the scribe that the International Basketball Federation had formed a five-man special committee that would handle the RP case. There had been initial talks among the Fiba, the BAP and the POC, but nothing significant was reached. The panel was composed of outgoing Fiba president Carl Ching Menky, Fiba secretary general Patrick Baumann, Fiba-Asia secretary general Dato Yeoh Choo Hock, former president Boris Stankovic and incoming president Bob Elphinston.

A breakfast meeting that included the basketball stakeholders was scheduled the following morning. Nothing was mentioned about the 10-minute speeches supposedly delivered by representatives of both the BAP and PB during the Central Board congress. It appeared that these had been scrapped from the agenda.

* * *

Early Monday night, unofficial reports started trickling in from the different parties in Tokyo. The reports said the talks had ended and that a joint communiqué was issued by the BAP and PB on their unification.

A three-man panel composed of Lina, Pilipinas Basketall president Bernie Atienza and a neutral third entity was tasked to rewrite the BAP constitution and bylaws, create a new table of organization and, according to an unimpeachable source, find a new name to replace the BAP.

All these had to be accomplished before the end of this month. Somewhere within the process, the POC's nod of approval had to be secured.

Everyone was elated at the development. Hopes once again soared that there would be a united basketball front, at last, for the Philippines, and the Fiba would subsequently lift its ban.

* * *

Well. I must admit I'm not as optimistic as everyone. After all, wasn't this exactly the same situation we were in following the memorandum of understanding signed by Baumann and the POC several months ago?

Didn't Lina and the four major stakeholders attempt to unify by working together on a new constitution and a table of organization—only to disagree, toward the homestretch, when the stakeholders insisted on renaming the BAP to Pilipinas Basketball?

Joey thereafter pulled out of the talks.

Now the group finds itself in a similar situation. It will take a whole lot to convince me that this time, it's going to be different. Nope, I still don't see light at the end of the tunnel.

* * *

HOOPVINE: Even if the Fiba ban is lifted before the Dec. 1 Asian Games, PBA chair Ricky Vargas is not in favor of sending a team to Doha, Qatar. By that time, the PBA conference would be in its crucial phase… Good news from Ginebra team manager Allan Caidic: Rudy Hatfield blew into town last night!

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SPORTS

RP jins vying in 2 tough Korea tilts

RIVERO

THE PETRON NATIONAL TAEKWONDO TEAM will compete in two tournaments in Seoul, South Korea, on Sept. 4-9—the 1st World Poomsae Championships and the Korea Open.

Philippine Taekwondo Association president Robert N. Aventajado said eight athletes will vie in the poomsae event set Sept. 4-6.

These are Robert Joshua Danao, Karloff Fontanosa, Jeczerius Panotes, Brian Alan Sabido, James Warren Pascua, Francesca Camille Ararilla, Christine Baldonado and Rani Ann Ortega.

Vying in the Korea Open are John Paul Lizardo, Tshomlee Go, Manuel Rivero Jr., Ernesto Juan Mendoza III, Alexander Briones, Dax Alberto Morfe, Kathleen Eunice Alora, Loraine Lorelie Catalan, Kirstie Elaine Alora, Giselle Dinolan, Mary Antoinette Rivero and Ma. Criselda Roxas.

No less than 60 countries, including host Korea, are vying in the poomsae competition, according to PTA vice president Sung Chon Hong.

La Salle, Ateneo head Samsung schools golf cast

EIGHTEEN SCHOOLS BANNERED BY TRADITIONAL powerhouses La Salle and Ateneo vie for honors in the seventh Samsung Interscholastic Golf Championship slated Sept. 5-7 at the north course of the Canlubang Golf and Country Club in Laguna.

La Salle and Ateneo will be fielding teams in four of the five divisions as they again vie for supremacy in the annual championship for students of top universities and schools in Metro Manila and nearby areas.

Aside from the three branches of La Salle (Zobel, Greenhills and Taft) and Ateneo, also participating in the three-day tournament are Academy of St. John, Beacon School, Brent International, Claret, Colegio de San Agustin, Maria Ausciliatrice, Miriam, Poveda, School of Tomorrow, Seton Home, St. Paul Pasig, The Masters Academy and the University of Asia and the Pacific.

There are 123 players so far on the roster, according to the Professional Sports Management Group Inc.

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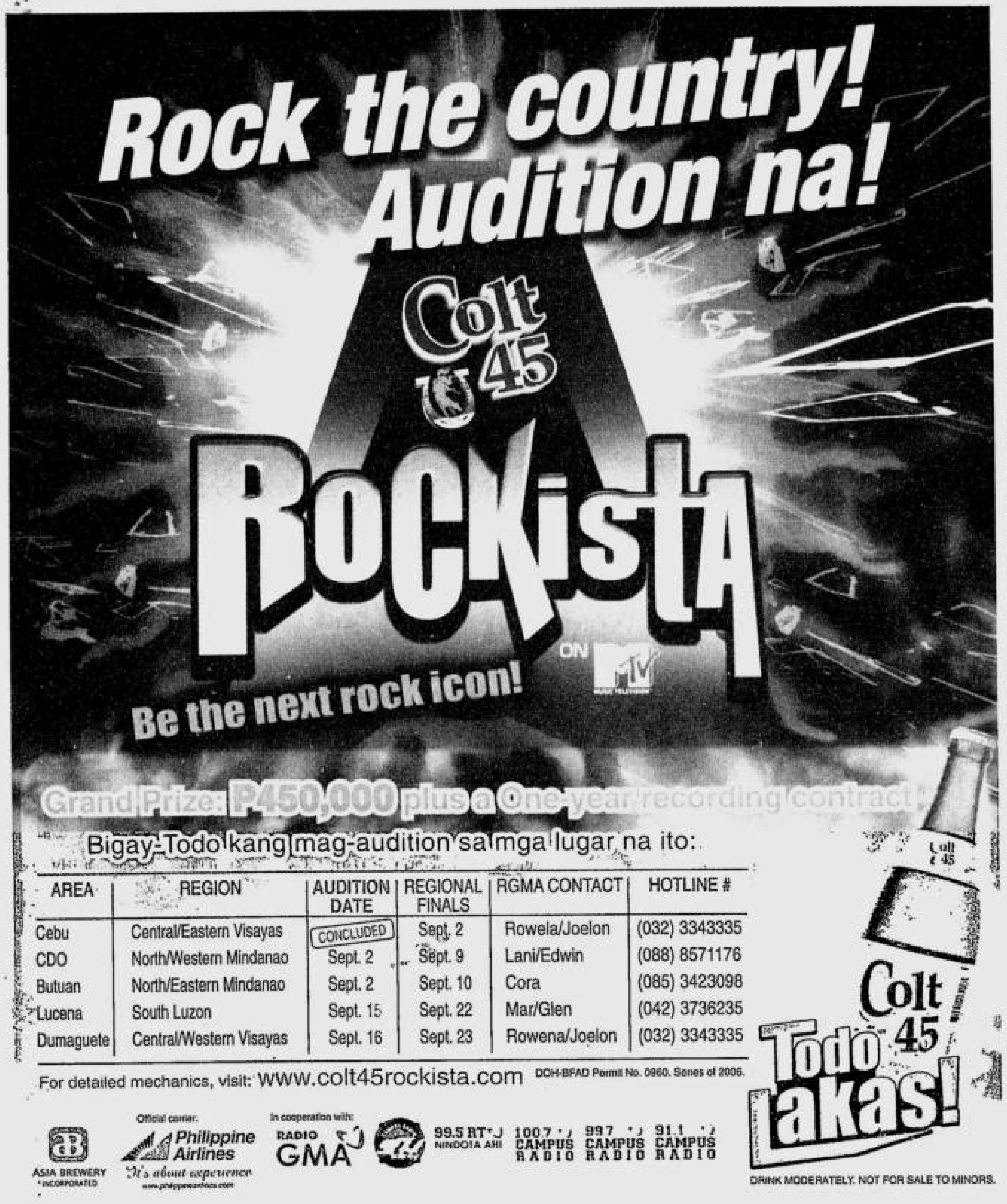
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CDO	North/Western Mindanao	Sept. 2	Sept. 9	Lani/Edwin	(088) 8571176
Butuan	North/Eastern Mindanao	Sept. 2	Sept. 10	Cora	(085) 3423098
Lucena	South Luzon	Sept. 15	Sept. 22	Mar/Glen	(042) 3736235
Dumaguete	Central/Western Visayas	Sept. 16	Sept. 23	Rowena/Joelon	(032) 3343335

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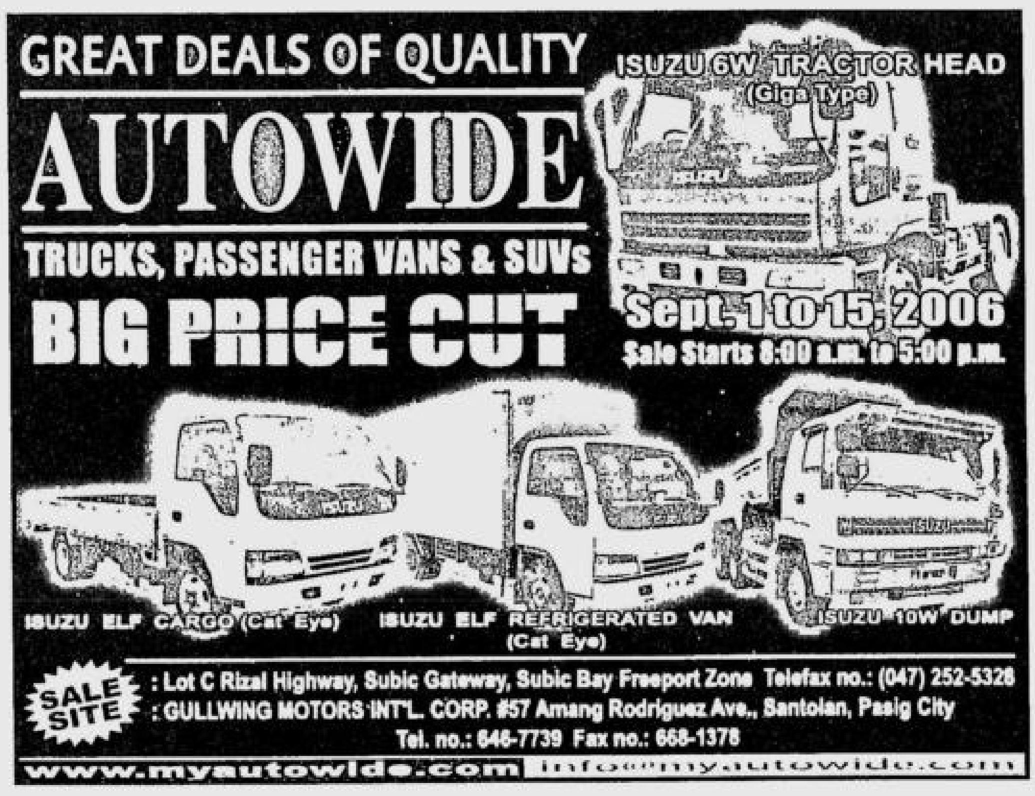
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE
Wednesday, August 30, 2006

iDOL ABC
Ang kwento ng panget na pinaganda!
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ABC
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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5	Nickelodeon				Legend Of Shaolin Kung Fu	Mon Colle Night	Sentro Headlines	Letty La Mas Fea		Doble Cara		Philippine Idol Exclusive	OHA!		Frontline		Big News	The Apprentice	Philippine Idol Exclusive
ABS-CBN 2		Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Yakitate Japan/ Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Calla Lily	Pangako Sa 'Yo	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Bituing Walang Ningning		Sa Piling Mo	My Girl	A Love To Kill	Bandila	Probe	Mirada De Mujer
AXN		CSI: NY (Season 2)		Worlds Apart		Ripley's Believe It or Not		Alias (Season IV)		The Amazing Race Family Edition		30 Seconds To Fame	Samsung Sports World	Maximum Exposure (Season II)		CSI: Miami (Season 4)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 5)	
Cartoon Network	Pixie & Dixie/ My Little Pony	All New Popeye Show	I am Weasel	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Winx Club	Xiaolin Showdown	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	The Simpsons	Samurai Jack/ [illegible] Samurai Jack	PokeMon	Dice	Gundam Seed Destiny/ Shaman King	The Simpsons/ Courage The Cowardly Dog	Teen Titans/ The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Justice League Unlimited/ The Simpsons	The Batman/ Aqua Teen Hunger Force/ Sealab 2021	X-Men Evolution/ Gundam Seed	Static Shock/ Shaman King
Cinema One		Small & Terrible				Pahiram Ng Isang Umaga				Astig			Persona	Sana Maulit Muli (9:15 PM)				La Vida Rosa	
Cinemax				A Cry In The Dark (4:15 PM)					Don't Talk To Strangers (6:25 PM)			Man-Thing			Eternal Sunshine Of The Spotless Mind (9:35 PM)				Sneakers (11:20 PM)
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		Cold Case		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	I, Detective	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit						The Grid	
Discovery Channel	Building The Ultimate	Perfect Disaster		American Chopper		A Walking With Dinosaurs Trilogy	A Walking With Dinosaurs Special	Building The Biggest		Wild Discovery		Hour China		Building The Biggest		A Haunting		Psychic Witness	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-[illegible] Bunny	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			American Dragon	Buzz on Maggie	Buzz on Maggie	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN				Asian X Games '06 - Show 1						X-Games 12 - Day3				Sportscenter Asia	Classic Boxing: Ali vs. Wepner		Classic Boxing: [illegible] vs. Cerdan		Sportscenter Asia
ETC		America's Next Top Model 5		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Veronica Mars 2		Beauty And The Geek 2		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen DeGeneres Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Cold Turkey 2		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	St. Thomas More Faithful Statesman	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	Faith In Motion	Truth In The Heart	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	Suffering And The Love Of God	EWTN Catholic Classic	The Church & The Poor: Building Bridges	Mother Angelica Live Classics		Daily Mass		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	One In Their Hearts: Heroes Of Priesthood	Parable	Rome Reports	Special Programming	
Fox News		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man Ang Lahat	Now and Forever (3:15 PM)	Ang Pagbabago (3:45 PM)		Saiyuki	Dragonball Z	Jewel In The Palace	24 Oras		Captain Barbell (7:10 PM)		Majika		I Luv NY (8:50 PM)	Love Of The Condor Heroes	Nuts Entertainment			Saksi
Hallmark Channel				Judging Amy		Sue Thomas F.B. Eye II		McLeod's Daughters		Strong Medicine II		Trust		Judging Amy		Out Of The Ashes			
HBO	The Baby-Sitters Club			[illegible] (4:15 PM)				Care Bears: Journey To Joke-A-Lot			50 First Dates (7:25 PM)			Huff 11, The Sample Closet		Huff 12, All The King's Horses (9:50 PM)	Huff 13, Crazy Nuts And All Up		Fear (11:40 PM)
Hero TV	Gosaurer	Gundam Seed	Duel Masters	Super Gals	Mirmo de Pon	Sugar The Snow Fairy	Naruto	Inuyasha	Saiyuki Reload	Full Metal Panic	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	Transformers Armada	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	B-Daman Bakugaiden	Beyblade G-Revolution	Gosaurer	Gundam Seed	Naruto
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	EBC Earth Files		Japan Video Topics/ Arms		EBC Earth Files		Travel Pilipinas	Japan Video Topics/ Arms	Up Close And Personal	IBC News Tonite		
JackTV		Bottomline		Afterburn		Chell	Filter	Afterburn		Mad TV		That 70s Show	Arrested Development	Last Comic Standing		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Chappelle's Show	The Late Show David Letterman	
Lifestyle Network		30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	DIY Crafts	Iron Chef America		My Country, My Kitchen	E! Entertainment Special		Living Space	Martha		Fine Living Special		Intimate Portrait	
MTV Philippines		Homewrecker	Room Raiders		MTV Hits					Get Spotted		TRL		Homewrecker	Room Raiders		Homecoming		
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXlog	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		MYX Live!		Band Of The Run	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXlog
National Geographic	Wild Orphans	National Geographic Specials		Bug Attack: Venom Wars		Planet Wild	Amazing Moments	Top 5 - Hurricane		WOW! Attack of the Mystery Shark		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Seconds From Disaster: Florida Swamp Air Crash		Inside 911: End Game	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports [illegible]			Diyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Siya?	Teledyaryo W/ Ray Langit & Angelique Lazo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo Final Edition				Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Net 25	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	In Focus	Euromaxx	Ang Mga Nagsi-[illegible] Daan		Ang Pagbubuyog		News Beat (Live)		OpenLine Live	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	Ang Mga Nagsi-[illegible] Daan		Ang Tamang Daan		World Report	In Focus	DWTV Journal News	Tomorrow Today
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold!	SpongeBob SquarePants	Rocket Power	Four Eyes/Up-side Down Show/Rugrats [illegible] Chalkzone Big Blow Up	SpongeBob SquarePants/ Right On Top	My Life As A Teenage Robot	All Grown Up	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	Romeo!	Naturally Sadie	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Love At First Sight				[illegible]				The Best Of Sharon And Gabby Fireworks				Kahit Butas ng Karayom Papasukin Ko				Ang Galing-Galing Mo Babes
Qtv	Goodluck	Shaman King	Outlaw Star	Galaxy Angel	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Phoenix	Irene		Damo	Project 11	Now Na!		News On Q	Balikbayan		Irene
RPN 9	TV Shopping				Kapatid Show	RPN Aksyon News		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	Iron Chef		Three Wishes		Extreme Make-Over		Newswatch Now	Cargo For Truth		Kerygma
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Sony Music Video		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports					GWS 32-2006	Tennis, WTA Acura Classic SF2				2006 FIBA World Championship Games: QF2				Beach Volleyball: FIVB Women's-Canada		Solar Sports Desk	NBA Access	Beach Volleyball: FIVB Women's-Shanghai China	
Sports Plus				Raceworld		Party Poker.com World Open '05				NASCAR Star-[illegible] 500 Bristol								U.S. Open '06 Day3	
Star Movies			Phantom Below (3:25 PM)			Welcome To Mooseport				Opening Night: The Devil Wears Prada (6:50 PM)	Elektra (7:20 PM)			Mr. 3000			Dr. Dolittle (10:45PM)		
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Desperate Housewives		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	Rockstar Supernova		Boston Legal (9:10 PM)		NCIS		Seinfeld	Rockstar Supernova
Studio 23								Blog	Pinoy Dream Academy	Wazzup Wazzup	CSI	24 (8:15 PM)		It's A Guy Thing		News Central	Oprah (10:45PM)		Men's Room

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SM group offers P92/share for EPCIBank

Tender offer can cost P36.9B

By Doris C. Dumlao and Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SM GROUP OF MALL TYCOON HENRY SY HAS made an offer to buy out other shareholders in Equitable PCIBank at P92 a share or about P36.9 billion for all the bank's stocks outside of the retail-based conglomerate's holdings.

The SM Group, now the single-biggest stockholder in EPCIBank with a 34-percent stake, has agreed to pay P92 a share—the same price demanded by minority shareholder Government Service Insurance System—on a two-year installment.

"There's actually an intention to buy more shares, not a merger offer," said EPCIBank vice chair Teresita Sy.

The SM group controls the country's seventh biggest bank, Banco de Oro Universal Bank, which earlier offered to merge with EPCIbank. This was, however, opposed by minority shareholders GSIS and the Romualdez family.

In a statement yesterday, SM Investments Corp. said the tender offer would consolidate SM group's holdings in the bank. It has also committed

SM GROUP/ B2

RP firms eye Middle East deals

By Ronnel W. Domingo

SIX LOCAL FIRMS INVOLVED IN building homes are looking at more contracts in the Middle East following a construction boom in the region through participation in a construction fair in Dubai to be held in October.

According to the Center for International Trade Exhibitions and Missions, the local homebuilding sector has been seeing continued growth in the past years with help from export revenues.

Marble suppliers, known for the color and durability of their products, posted a 7.7-percent growth in exports to $9 million last year.

There are at least 13 marble exporters in the country who source their supplies from Bulacan, Metro Manila, Romblon, Cebu, Nueva Ecija and Batangas.

Also last year, export sales from woodworks grew by 29 percent to $107.5 million while revenues from shipments of sanitary bathroom fixtures rose 36 percent to $27.2 million.

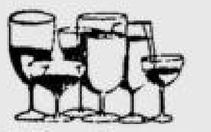
Assistant Trade Secretary Felicitas Agoncillo-Reyes said the home building sector was ready for independent promotion and that local firms would take part for the first time in the The Big 5 Dubai trade fair.

Reyes, who is also Citem chief, said The Big 5 was expected to link exporters with key decision makers in the Gulf region as well as access to knowledge in best industry practices and standards.

She said the trade show was also seen as a venue to secure supply contracts and bigger sales since majority of construction projects in the region were nearing completion, which

RP FIRMS/ B5

IN THIS ISSUE

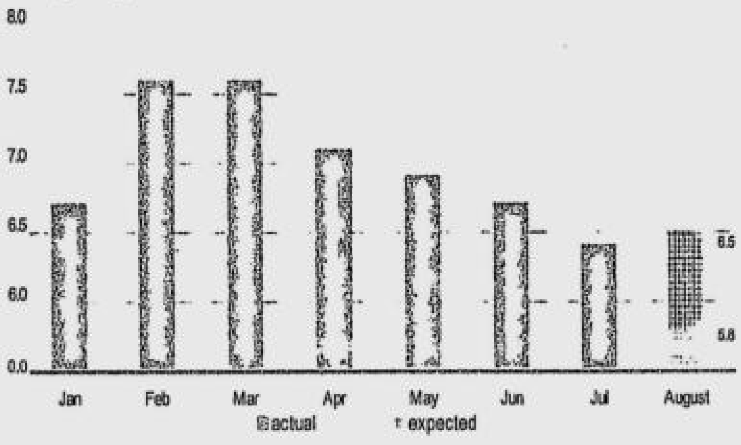


▨ **Partners** abandon Roco law firm/B2

▨ **Palace** seen issuing clarification on EO 556/B2

▨ **Japan** trade sentiment on RP continues to go up/B12

INFLATION RATES
January to August 2006



August inflation seen at 5.8-6.5%

THE COUNTRY'S INFLATION rate likely eased further to 5.8-6.5 percent in August as the strong peso and bountiful agricultural harvests tempered increases in fuel prices, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas projected.

The country's year-on-year inflation tapered off to 6.4 percent in July from 6.7 percent in June and 6.9 percent in May.

"August inflation is expected to be lower than the July figure due to the continued firmness of the peso and lower food prices," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters.

A strong peso, despite some trade-off in terms of lower export margins, tempers the country's inflation rate by reducing the import bill, particularly the purchase of oil from offshore suppliers.

At the same time, the country's strong agricultural output in the first semester helped stabilize food prices. Farm output expanded by an estimated 6-6.6 percent in the first half, underpinned by strong palay and corn production as well as an increase in the output of livestock and fisheries by aquaculture, based on estimates from the National Economic and Development Authority.

The forecast of a softer inflation rate for August was in line with the BSP's expectation that inflation would slow down for the rest of the year and return to the targeted path of 4-5 percent next year.

The government has scaled down its inflation forecast for this year to 6.9-7 percent and further to 4.3-4.8 percent for 2007, based on latest projections made by the inter-agency Development Budget Coordination Committee. The inflation forecasts were lowered from earlier projections of 7.3-7.9 percent and 4.3-5 percent, respectively.

The DBCC documents said the inflation rate for 2007 would drop given the following assumptions: The impact of the expanded value-added tax would have been fully absorbed in 2006 and the conduct of elections in 2007 are expected to have little effect on inflation since inflationary pressures from election spending have been minimal since the Edsa Revolution in 1986.

The latest forecasts indicated that government economic managers were confident that inflation would remain manageable despite continued volatility in oil prices.

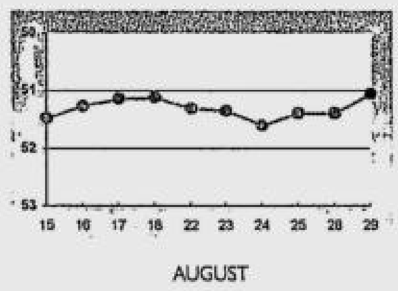
The DBCC projections assumed that for this year, Dubai oil price would rise to an average of $63.42 a barrel from the earlier expectation of $62.

The DBCC has also raised its forecast on Dubai oil prices for next year to $67.05 a barrel from the previous $63.

The recent downtrend in domestic inflation has in turn eased pressures on the BSP, an inflation-targeting central bank, to follow the monetary tightening in the United States.

The BSP has maintained its overnight borrowing rate at 7.5 percent and overnight lending rate at 9.75 percent since October last year. *Doris C. Dumlao*

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 51.05 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Aug. 29, 2006

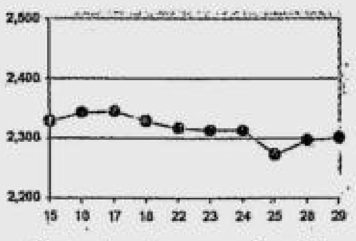
¥ 116.61 = $ 1
As of 3 p.m., Aug. 29, 2006

GOLD: $615.30-615.80
per ounce Hong Kong, Aug. 29, 2006

STOCK MARKET

Shares close higher on bargain-hunting

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

SHARE PRICES closed 0.18-percent higher yesterday on last-minute bargain-hunting after a lack of strong leads to provide direction, dealers said.

"The market appears tentative although overnight gains on Wall Street seem to have provided it support," AB Capital Securities research head Jose Vistan said.

Nestor Aguila, president of local brokerage firm DA Market Securities Inc., said yesterday's tight trading range was an indication that the market remained in consolidation mode.

"Bargain hunters are there, although they are still waiting for further discounts before accumulating aggressively," Aguila said.

Investors shied away from most blue chips and focused on speculative stocks but late buying in property developer Ayala Land Inc. pushed up the main index above the key 2,300 points level.

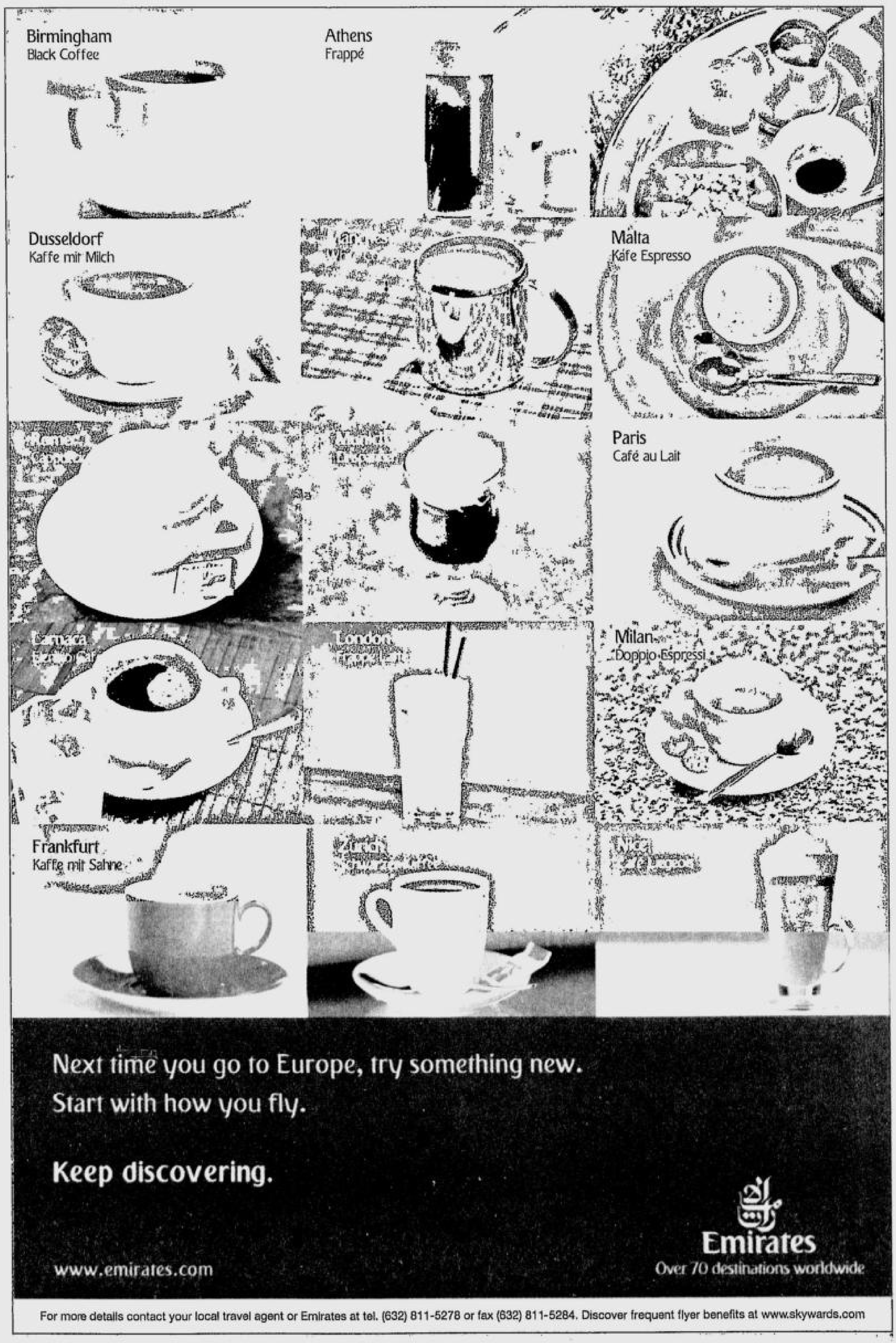
The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 4.11 points to 2,302.69, the day's high and off a low of 2,286.99. Volume was 2 billion shares worth P1.09 billion. The broader all-shares index rose 3.99 points to 1,430.75.

Gainers beat losers 57 to 30, with 60 stocks unchanged.

"Stocks moved sideways with no major leads on the domestic front to trade on. Investors were largely focused on speculative issues," said Rommel Macapagal of Westlink Global Equities.

Top-traded PLDT lost P5 at P1,925.

Ayala Land rose 25 centavos to P13.50 and parent Ayala Corp. was up P5 at P437.50. *AFP, AP*



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Partners abandon Roco law firm

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

THE ROCO KAPUNAN MIGALLOS AND Luna law firm has been hit anew by key desertions. Two name partners, Barbara Anne Migallos and managing partner Troy Luna, are the latest to quit the law office only a year after the death of its founder, former Sen. Raul Roco.

According to the grapevine, Migallos and Luna broke away following continued management differences with Lorna Kapunan, especially in the Equitable PCIBank boardroom fight.

Migallos, the corporate secretary of Philex Mining--whose shareholders include Equitable PCIBank and Social Security System--was apparently surprised by Kapunan wading into the EPCIBank controversy and siding with minority director Ferdinand Martin Romualdez in his fight against SSS and EPCIB vice chair Teresita Sy.

Cocktales has confirmed that cash-rich Philex has decided to go along with Migallos, who is expected to form a new law firm with Luna.

Another cash-rich client, the Lopezes' First Philippine Holdings, is expected to also transfer the account to the putative Migallos and Luna firm. The First Philippine managing director for energy, Peter Garrucho Jr., has just been elected EPCIB director, backed by Sy.

Formed in 1986, the Roco law firm saw second name partner Jose Mario Buñag leaving also in August four years ago in a dispute over partnership profits.

Now the internal revenue commissioner, Buñag had been heard telling colleagues he had profit-sharing issues with Roco, who, despite then being with the GMA Cabinet and, prior to that, in the Senate, still retained partnership ties with the law firm he supposedly had resigned from.

Another name partner, Pablito Perez, also left afterwards.

Lawyers and greed

AND speaking of lawyers, the Supreme Court has agreed with dermatologist Vinson Pineda that the P50 million in additional professional fees being demanded by his three lawyers was simply "unconscionable greed."

Pineda sued his lawyers Clodualdo de Jesus, Carlos Ambrosio and Emmanuel Mariano, who had demanded a 10-percent share of the property awarded to Pineda after his marriage to his wife Ma. Aurora was dissolved in 1998.

The 10-percent cut was on top of the P5.8 million legal expenses and the free treatment of the lawyers' friends and relatives that the doctor had already spent on the three.

"It is (the three lawyers') despicable behavior which gives lawyering a bad name...," said ponente Justice Renato Corona. "They could not charge [Dr. Pineda] a fee based on percentage, absent an express agreement to that effect."

Saying the practice of law is a decent profession "and not a money-making trade," the high court's Second Division reduced the fees to P1 million for De Jesus, and P500,000 each for Ambrosio and Mariano.

Money-go-round

- EDITOR-PUBLISHER Ronaldo Romero, who had objected to Businessworld president Barbara Locsin's appointment as concurrent chair, has been prevailed upon to stay at the business daily by the 30-percent PLDT block--represented by Doy Vea, Raul Fabella and Albert del Rosario--and independent director Cesar E.A. Virata.
- LANCE Gokongwei has relinquished the presidency of Robinsons Land and the related title of chief operating officer in favor of his second-in-command and first cousin, Frederick Go.

Heard through the grapevine

NATURAL Resources Secretary Angelo Reyes wants to adopt a "use it or lose it" policy among the 2,784 mining applications and tenements to weed out the speculative rent-seekers from the real miners.

A draft department order, which mandates a two-year deadline to start actual work from DENR approval, is now being circulated among the industry officials for their comments.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

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Palace seen issuing clarification on EO 556

PNOC may hold new round of talks on Malampaya oil project

By Abigail L. Ho

MALACANANG IS EXPECTED TO CLARIFY that Executive Order No. 556, which concerns the development of the Camago-Malampaya oil rim, is not retroactive.

"EO 556 embodies a government policy to promote a competitive and transparent process in selecting joint venture partners of Philippine National Oil Co. in the development of its oil and gas service contract areas," Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said in a statement yesterday.

"Palace lawyers are preparing a clarification on the non-retroactivity of EO 556. Whether the process undertaken by PNOC over the Malampaya oil project conforms with the requirement of a competitive process is a factual issue that will be determined once PNOC gives a formal report," he added.

EO 556 states that no government agency, including PNOC, can award farm-in or farm-out contracts for the exploration, development and extraction of oil from the Malampaya reserves.

Before forging an agreement with any party, the order said a "strict bidding procedure" should be followed. Non-compliance with the EO would mean the discontinuation or cancellation of any agreement concerning the Malampaya oil rim.

PNOC was criticized earlier for allegedly entering into a farm-in agreement with Mitra Energy Ltd. without going through transparent procedures and even bypassing a local group that also wanted to develop the Malampaya oil reserves.

Both Lotilla and PNOC president Eduardo Manalac clarified that no contract had yet been forged with any entity, Mitra included.

"We were still negotiating with (Mitra) when the EO was issued. We had not yet actually signed a farm-in agreement," Manalac said in an earlier interview.

He added that PNOC would conduct new negotiations with parties interested in developing the Malampaya oil leg as soon as certain provisions of EO 556 had been clarified.

Efforts directed at developing the oil reserves and extracting oil from the Malampaya field were put on hold following the issuance of EO 556, he said.

"Malacañang has to clarify some points in the EO. After they issue the necessary clarifications, we'll have to sit down again with interested firms," he said.

In the meantime, Mitra spokesman Chris Whitmee said he was in complete agreement with Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita's statement that there was no contract to rescind as regards the development of the Camago-Malampaya Oil Leg (CMOL) as negotiations with DOE/PNOC had not been concluded at the time EO 556 was issued.

Last May 31 2006, PNOC advised Mitra that its bid was successful and that it was invited to start farm-in negotiations with PNOC.

On June 1 2006, PNOC announced Mitra's selection among eight groups vying for the project.

From June 2006 to Aug. 11 2006, officials of Mitra and PNOC were almost in weekly discussions about negotiations on a conditional farm-in agreement for CMOL development. The signing of the agreement was supposed to be held on Aug. 25.

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Prof. Rene T. Domingo is a teacher, writer, and management consultant. He is the Sime Darby Professor of Manufacturing and the program director of AIM's Advanced Manufacturing Management Course. Schooled and trained in Japan, he has written quality and service management and world-class manufacturing practices. He trains and consults for a number of Asian companies in the field of total quality management, business process engineering, lean manufacturing and six sigma.

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SM group offers ...

From page B1

to put in more funds to boost the bank's capital and prepare it for stringent capital adequacy requirements under the Basle II framework.

The tender offer will start on Aug. 31 and run through Sept. 28, based on the plan approved by the SMIC board. The transaction is expected to be completed on Oct. 2.

The SM group intends to pay 10 percent of the total price on Oct. 2, another 10 percent on June 2, 2007, another 10 percent on Feb. 2, 2008, and the remaining 70 percent on Oct. 2, 2008.

In a separate statement, GSIS president Winston Garcia said he would consider this offer in relation to the agency's 12.7-percent stake in EPCIBank.

"This is the price we have been demanding all along. But we don't want to go to a cash call. We don't want a long process," Garcia said.

"This is a vindication for GSIS. A year ago, people thought we were just hyping the market," he added.

The latest offer topped earlier proposals submitted by the SM group. An earlier deal between the Social Security System and the SM group on December 2004, which was not yet consummated due to legal obstacles, valued EPCIBank shares at only P43.50 a share.

The merger through a share-swap of 1.6 BDO shares for every EPCIB share that was offered later also translated to a price of P56 a share for EPCIBank against the P63-P65 trading price at that time.

If computed against net present value, the SM group's new offer would represent a premium over EPCIBank's last traded price of P75 a share.

Joseph Roxas, president of Eagle Equities Inc., estimated the net present cash value of the offer at about P80 a share based on an assumed two-year bond yield of 8 percent.

He said it remained to be seen whether this tender offering would allow the SM group to get a controlling stake in EPCIBank.

Should the SM group raise its voting interest from 34 to 67 percent from the tender offer, it could already effect a merger between EPCIBank and BDO under corporate laws.

A merger between EPCIBank and BDO will create the country's second biggest banking group with combined assets of P528.6 billion (excluding China Banking Corp.), next to Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.'s consolidated assets of P594 billion.

Cora dela Paz, president of the SSS (the second biggest stockholder in the bank with about 29 percent), yesterday said the state-owned pension fund would have to study the tender offer first.

"There is a process that we have to follow. It will have to be studied by our investment committee and endorsed to the board and the commission," Dela Paz said.

She added that the SSS would also have to test the valuation offer by going back to the market, especially since some other groups had expressed interest in buying out the SSS' stake as well.

Even assuming that the SSS would accept the offer, she said a clearance must be sought from the Department of Justice on whether the pension fund could participate given pending lawsuits involving the sale of its shares in the bank.

Meanwhile, SMIC has also offered to purchase, on a negotiated basis, the 10.8 percent stake in EPCIB owned by EBC Investments Inc., which is valued at P7.25 billion.

Court-appointed receiver hopeful on CAP rehab prospects

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE COURT-APPOINTED RECEIVER OF BELEAguered College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. said the company might be able to pay back education plan holders within three to six months should its rehabilitation be approved by the court.

CAP rehabilitation receiver Mamerto Marcelo Jr. said after a hearing on Monday at the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 149 that CAP would be able to raise more than P1 billion from the sale of its 19-percent stake in Bank of Commerce to pay back the pre-need firm's liabilities to education plan holders.

"This should be more than enough to cover availing plan holders and unpaid vouchers for the past three to four semesters," Marcelo told the INQUIRER.

However, lawyers of Bank of Commerce said during the hearing that some of CAP's shares in the bank were covered by a swap agreement with information technology school Systems Technology Institute.

In 2003, CAP entered into a subscription agreement with STI to subscribe to P1 billion worth of STI Gift of Knowledge Certificates in exchange for P61.4 million and investments in shares of the bank.

Makati RTC Judge Cesar Untalan ordered both the bank and CAP to submit their memorandum of agreement before the court to clarify this issue and the deal's possible impact on beneficiaries of CAP.

Untalan also ordered CAP to submit within 10 days from Monday a detailed report of its cash flow.

The judge urged plan holders yesterday to accept and understand future decisions of the court regarding CAP's liquidity problems.

CAP's case has been pending before the Makati court since it filed for rehabilitation last year.

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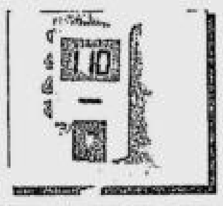

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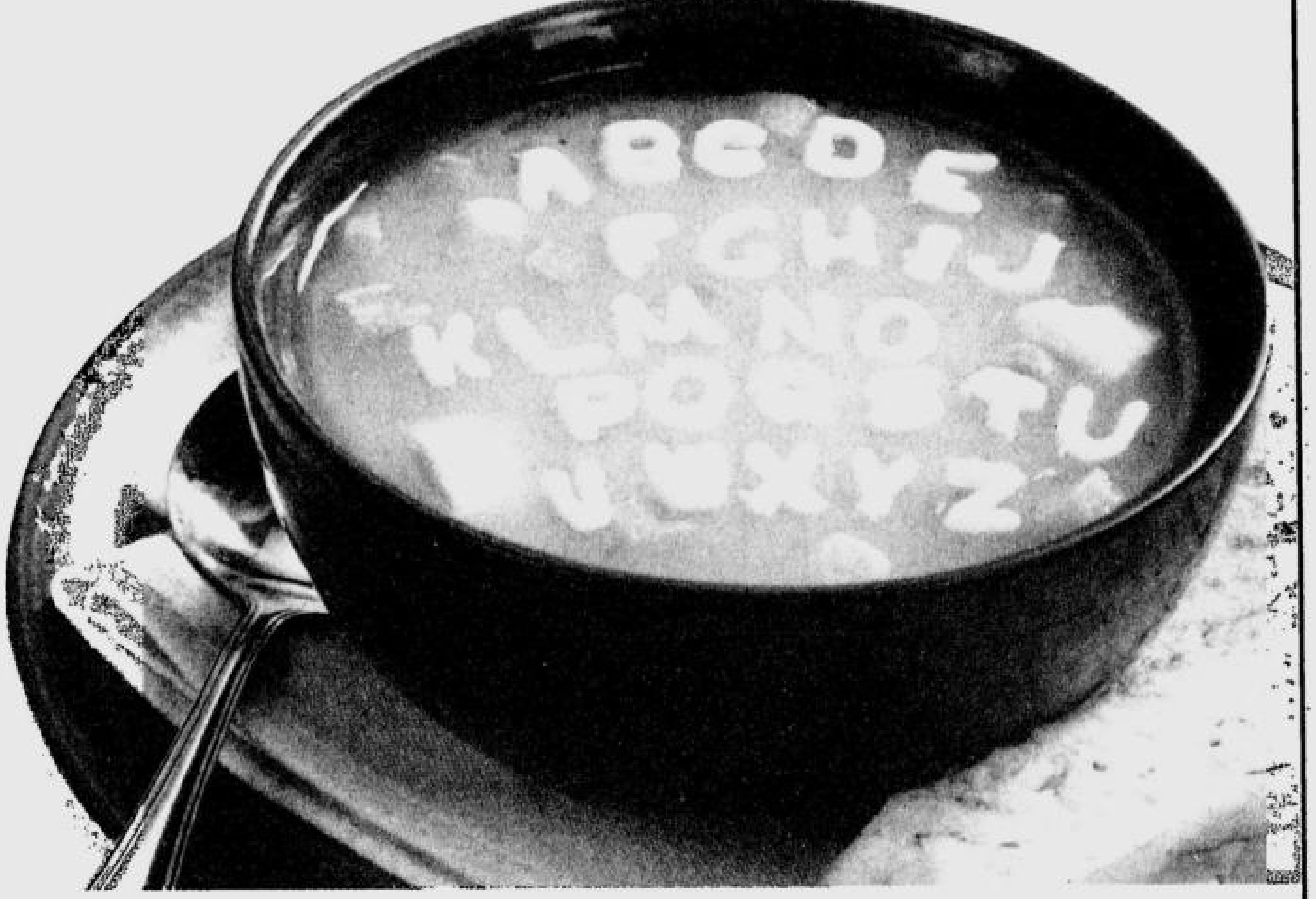

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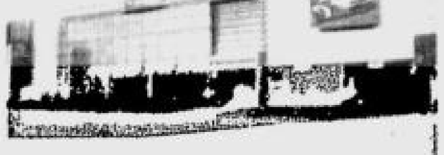

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Hospital to consider 'alternative' medicine

DR. VICTOR R. POTENCIANO MEDICAL Center, formerly Polymedic General Hospital Inc., has received a proposal from one of its board directors to accept doctors who practice "alternative" forms of medicine.

VRP Medical Center director Conrado Dayrit, who has forwarded the proposal to the hospital's board of directors, yesterday said certain forms of western medicine, which are characterized by the heavy use of drugs such as antibiotics, do not cure certain illnesses.

"Western medicine doesn't cure cancer or diabetes, for instance," Dayrit said.

This is where 'alternative' forms of medicine, including acupuncture and herbal-based or therapy-based treatments, can come in.

Dayrit said in a briefing yesterday that the proposal had to be studied considering that there might be major adjustments to the diet requirements of patients and possible resistance from doctors who were educated to practice western forms of medicine.

Dayrit, 87, helped make virgin coconut oil (VCO) a popular dietary supplement here and abroad .

He is a well known pharmacologist, cardiologist, internist, science researcher, author and University of the Philippines professor.

VRP Medical Center hospital administrator Victoria P. Vergel de Dios said Dayrit's proposal had not yet been approved by the hospital's board.

VRP Medical Center yesterday relaunched its name to avoid confusion stemming from its old name VRPMC which, according to market surveys, had too many letters.

Patients thus tended to use the old name, Polymedic, instead of VRPMC.

VRP Medical Center changed its name to "VRPMC" between 1997 and 1998. VRP Medical Center has been spending P10 million a year for the past five years to upgrade its medical facilities and equipment to better service its patients. Its five-floor Physicians Center has doctors' clinics and modern facilities to complement its 10-storey hospital building with 189 beds.

VRP Medical Center was founded by Victor Potenciano in 1967. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

SEC approves reduction in Metro Pacific capital

Corporate restructuring underway

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION has approved the reduction in the authorized capital of Metro Pacific Corp. from P30 billion to P1.5 billion.

MPC said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday that it had requested a nine-day suspension in the trading of its shares, from Aug. 29 to Sept. 8, to allow investors to update their stock certificates.

MPC last traded at 20 centavos a share.

MPC shareholders during the company's meeting last June 15 had approved the decrease in the company's capital stock as part of a plan to retire 450 million series 1 preferred shares, which were converted into common shares and to wipe out the company's capital deficit.

This is part of the company's corporate restructuring program.

MPC's authorized capital stock of P1.5 billion will be divided into 1.45 billion common shares, 49.9 million series 1 preferred shares, and 125,000 series 2 preferred shares with a par value of P1 a share.

MPC is fixing its corporate structure to allow it to invest in infrastructure, power and consumer-driven sectors.

The reorganization involves three stages and will be implemented under a newly formed investment holding firm dubbed Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC).

The first stage involves a reduction in Metro Pacific's capital stock, a reverse stock split and the sale of Metro Pacific's 51 percent stake in Landco to MPIC.

In the second stage, the newly formed MPIC will make a tender offer to Metro Pacific shareholders. At the same time, MPIC will list its shares on the PSE in place of Metro Pacific. At this stage, MPIC will directly own a majority stake in Landco and Metro Pacific.

Metro Pacific, meanwhile, will operate as a private company and will own Nenaco and other land assets, including those in Fort Bonifacio.

The third phase will involve raising P2.7 billion in new capital through a stock rights issue.

Metro Pacific signed an agreement yesterday with British investment firm Ashmore Global Situations Fund for the latter to invest in MPIC by way of rights assigned by the First Pacific Group.

Once the rights issue is completed by September, MPIC will have a total capital of P4.5 billion.

After the offer, MPIC will be 52-percent owned by the First Pacific Group, 35 percent by Ashmore and 13 percent by the public.

Russian terminal operator to take pointers from ICTSI

By Riza T. Olchondra

INTERNATIONAL CONTAINER TERMINAL Services Inc. is one of the best when it comes to container port operations and foreign companies are taking notice.

Officials from Russian shipping line Far Eastern Shopping Co. Ltd. are in the country to take pointers on container cargo operations from ICTSI, which operates the Manila International Container Terminal.

Fesco officials started training under ICTSI last March; and they will soon be joined by officials from Far Eastern Container Terminal (FECT).

"As an international privatized modern trading gateway, the MICT has attracted port authorities and terminal operators from different parts of the world to take a closer look at MICT," said Francis M. Andrews, ICTSI senior vice president for operations and MICT general manager.

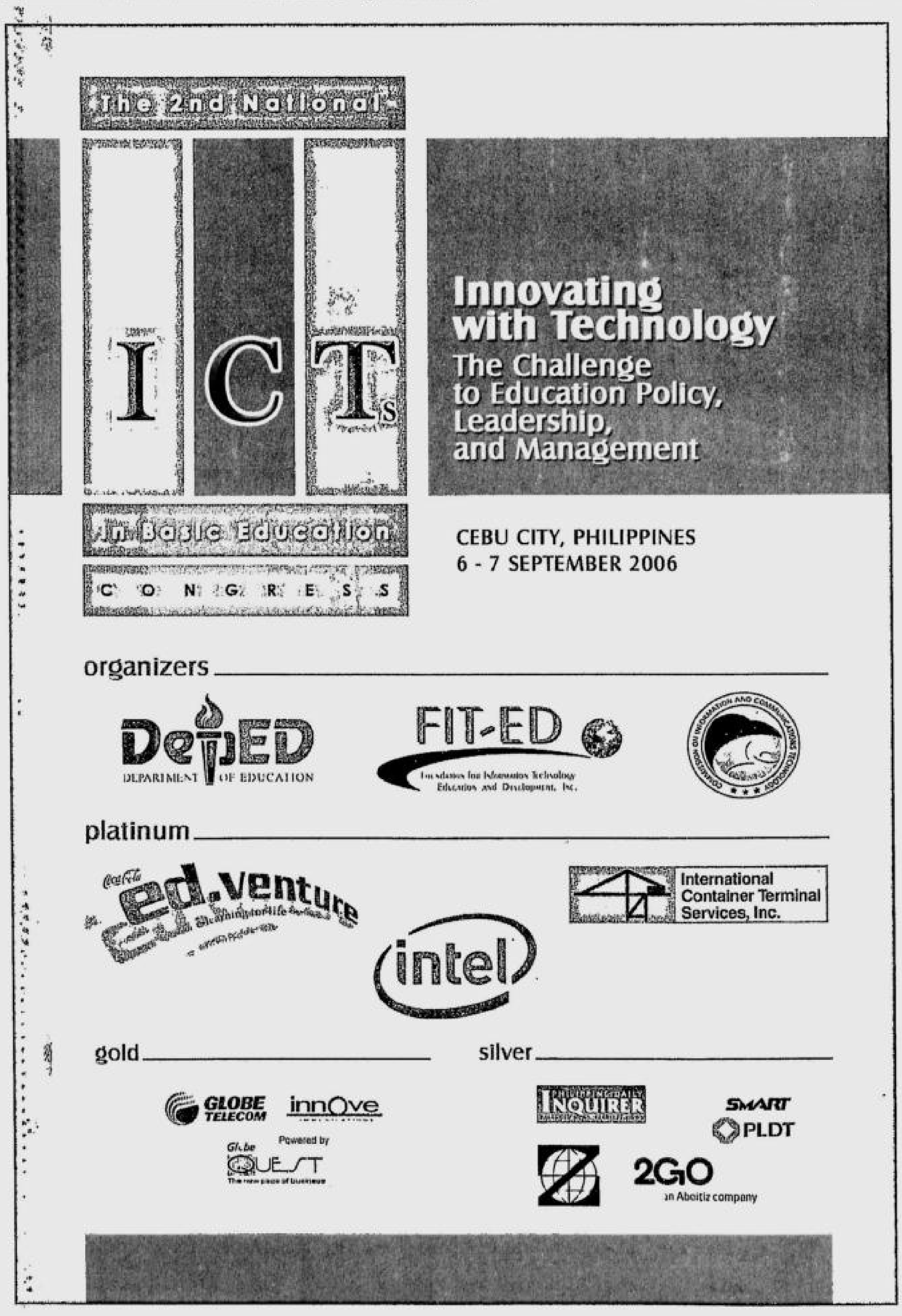
To learn how MICT implements cargo management and port security systems, the Russian company sent key officers to the MICT to undergo training and benchmarking activities for containerized cargo handling operations.

"As a client, Fesco has acknowledged the MICT as one of the few ports in the region that can perform and deliver world class container handling operations. We are pleased by Fesco's decision to have Vladivostok's training here in Manila," Andrews said.

ICTSI has operations in six continents while FECT handles break bulk cargo at Vladivostok Commercial Port and plans to expand to handling container cargo.

Fesco, on the other hand, operates out of the Vladivostok.

"They were pleased with how we showed the whole business cycle and how existing practices here at the MICT can be applied in Vladivostok," Andrews said.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DISCLOSURES

MICKY Yong has tendered his resignation as director of Prime Orion Philippines Inc.

* * *

FREDERICK D. Go has been appointed president and chief operating officer of Robinsons Land Corp.

* * *

MEANWHILE, Lance Y. Gokongwei, who had earlier resigned as president and COO, has been appointed as vice chairman and deputy chief executive Officer of the company.

* * *

ARANETA Properties, Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Oct. 6. Stockholders of record as of Sept. 12 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

SAN Miguel Pure Foods Co. Inc. will hold a special stockholders' meeting on Sept. 25, 2 p.m. at the Executive Dining Room at the 2nd floor of the San Miguel Head Office Complex in Mandaluyong City. Stockholders of record as of September 4 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

Compiled by Kate Pedroso, PDI Research

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 29, 2006)

NAME	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.6	14,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	35	35.5	35	35	1,039,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	52.5	53	52	52.5	510,600
China Banking Corp.	695	695	690	695	2,190
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	600
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.38	4,130,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	76	76.5	74	75	277,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	38.5	38.5	37.5	37.5	207,100
Philippine National Bank	34	34	33.5	33.5	6,300
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	17	17	17	17	15,500
Security Bank Corp.	47	48	47	48	6,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	44	44	44	44	40,000
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	1.9	2.08	1.9	2.06	11,426,000
First Metro Invest. Corp	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	10,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1650	1650	1650	1650	590
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	100,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2050	2060	2050	2060	2,230
Ivantage Corp.	1.48	1.48	1.4	1.42	9,415,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	43	43.5	43	43.5	151,200
First Phil Hldgs Corp	41	41.5	41	41.5	1,139,600
Manila Electric Co. A	16.25	16.5	16.25	16.25	99,200
Manila Electric Co. B	25	26	25	25.5	681,100
Manila Water Co. Inc.	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.9	1,112,000
Petron Corp.	3.95	3.95	3.9	3.9	3,222,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.32	0.35	0.3	0.3	2,710,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.7	1.7	50,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
CADP Group Corp.	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	20,000
Cen Azucar de Tarlac	3.95	3.95	3.95	3.95	8,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23	23	23	23	16,200
Jollibee Foods Corp.	32.5	32.5	32	32	260,600
Pancake House Inc.	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	5,000
RFM Corp.	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	700,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	4	4	3.9	3.95	379,000
San Miguel Corp. A	64.5	65	64	65	99,700
San Miguel Corp. B	71.5	71.5	70.5	71	113,500
Universal Robina Corp	18	18	17.75	18	1,548,600
Vitarich Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	790,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	710,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	12,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	1.28	1.32	1.28	1.32	41,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	61,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	2,000
CHEMICALS					
Corro-Coat Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.4	3.4	95,000
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	3,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.59	0.6	0.58	0.59	53,510,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.17	0.23	0.165	0.19	274,560,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	40,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	10,000,000
Ayala Corp.	427.5	440	427.5	437.5	213,440
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.49	200,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.9	4.95	4.9	4.95	206,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.028	0.031	0.027	0.03	74,700,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.8	1.82	205,000
Apc Group Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.3	8,590,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	21,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.94	0.95	0.94	0.95	650,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1	1	1	1	30,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.08	1.12	1.08	1.12	11,995,000
DMCI Holdings Inc	4.05	4.1	4.05	4.1	793,000
Filinvest Dev Corp.	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	15,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	5.6	5.7	5.6	5.7	61,000
Keppel Holdings	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	5,000
Medco Holdings	0.21	0.22	0.21	0.21	700,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.58	0.82	0.58	0.82	7,350,000
Pacifica	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	20,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	40,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.59	0.59	950,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.145	0.145	0.14	0.14	15,900,000
SM Investments Corp.	217	217	215	217	85,500
South China Resources Inc	0.87	0.88	0.87	0.88	150,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.83	1.06	0.83	1.04	1,290,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.135	0.135	0.13	0.13	6,590,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	100,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc	13.25	13.5	13.25	13.5	5,503,800
Belle Corp.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	12,051,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	400,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.22	2.26	2.22	2.26	681,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	1,010,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.48	27,040,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	600,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.055	0.065	0.055	0.0625	69,400,000
Filinvest Land, Inc.	1.34	1.36	1.34	1.34	9,882,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.13	0.15	0.13	0.15	2,290,000
Gotesco Land Inc. B	0.15	0.155	0.145	0.155	4,070,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	10,000
Interport Res.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	27,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.22	0.22	0.215	0.22	1,690,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.66	1.68	11,590,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.29	0.33	0.29	0.31	7,040,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	700,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	12.75	13	12.75	12.75	73,600
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	950,000
SM Development Corp.	1.64	1.68	1.64	1.68	19,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.8	7.9	7.7	7.9	1,846,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.62	0.74	0.62	0.67	5,490,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.0925	0.135	0.0925	0.115	38,100,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	16	16	16	16	1,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	54,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.26	1.26	1.24	1.26	765,000
Globe Telecom Inc	980	985	975	980	28,070
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	2,470,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1925	1930	1905	1925	138,730
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.195	0.195	2,140,000
Imperial Res.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	7,600,000
Ionics Inc.	2.04	2.04	2	2.04	395,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	1,300,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.05	0.0525	0.05	0.0525	5,100,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.2	1.2	1.14	1.14	194,000
Philweb Corp.	0.03	0.03	0.029	0.03	99,700,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	3	3	3	3	61,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	20,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	763,900
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc	0.94	0.98	0.94	0.98	1,150,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.28	1.28	53,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	1,752,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.6	1.62	1.6	1.62	1,030,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.31	0.34	0.31	0.32	3,700,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.47	450,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	5,000
Far Eastern University	1110	1110	1110	1110	50
Ipeople Inc	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	10,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.24	2.28	2.22	2.26	214,000
Paxys Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	630,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	4.9	4.95	4.9	4.9	2,040,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	4.9	4.95	4.9	4.9	161,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0085	0.009	0.0085	0.009	194,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	8.2	8.2	8.1	8.2	626,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. A	0.25	0.25	0.245	0.245	9,300,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.28	2,010,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.018	0.019	0.017	0.018	295,200,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	98,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	259,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	4.05	4.05	4	4	2,205,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	4.15	4.15	4.05	4.1	3,886,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	24.5	24.5	23.5	23.5	308,400
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.6	0.6	0.58	0.6	600,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.63	0.64	0.62	0.62	810,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated, Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	1,380,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	116,100,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	79,500,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.2	1.2	1.18	1.18	307,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.24	1.24	1.22	1.22	1,606,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	16,200
PREFERRED					
Ayala Corp. Pref. B	103	104	103	103	6,530
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,000

CURRENCIES

August 29, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.782044	1.000000	51.3100
Japan	Yen	0.006674	0.008534	0.4379
United Kingdom	Pound	1.480957	1.893700	97.1657
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.100530	0.128548	6.5958
Switzerland	Franc	0.632620	0.808931	41.5062
Canada	Dollar	0.703720	0.899847	46.1711
Singapore	Dollar	0.495655	0.633794	32.5200
Australia	Dollar	0.593042	0.758323	38.9096
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.074498	2.652661	136.1080
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.208528	0.266645	13.6816
Brunei	Dollar	0.494089	0.631792	32.4172
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000110	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.020771	0.026560	1.3628
UAE	Dirham	0.212934	0.272279	13.9706
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.278700	65.6101
Argentina	Peso	0.252680	0.323102	16.5784
Brazil	Real	0.363522	0.464835	23.8507
Denmark	Kroner	0.134029	0.171383	8.7937
India	Rupee	0.016829	0.021519	1.1041
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212541	0.271776	13.9448
Mexico	New Peso	0.071915	0.091958	4.7184
New Zealand	Dollar	0.499008	0.638081	32.7399
Norway	Kroner	0.124355	0.159013	8.1590
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012984	0.016603	0.8519
South Africa	Rand	0.108920	0.139276	7.1463
Korea	Won	0.000811	0.001037	0.0532
Sweden	Kroner	0.108014	0.138118	7.0868
Syria	Pound	0.015065	0.019264	0.9884
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023752	0.030372	1.5584
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000364	0.000466	0.0239

Metrobank moves to boost cash transfer operations

Partnerships formed to reach out to Filipinos overseas

By Doris C. Dumlao

METROPOLITAN BANK AND Trust Co., the country's biggest bank, has teamed up with 35 new cash transfer and exchange houses to boost its remittance operations in the Middle East.

"Metrobank is establishing more partnerships to bring its products and services closer to Filipinos across the globe," Metrobank international offices and subsidiaries group head and executive vice president Carmelita Araneta said in a statement yesterday.

Araneta said Metrobank had inked an agreement with reputable remittance companies in areas where many Filipinos were deployed, such as Qatar, Bahrain, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Oman and Kuwait.

The bank's new remittance partners include Bahrain Exchange Company, Asia Express Exchange, Al Fardan Exchange & Finance Co., Al Rahji Banka and Al Ansari Exchange.

Al Fardan Exhange is a pioneer in worldwide remittances in the UAE and a trusted name in this business.

Al Rahji Bank has over 400 branches all over Saudi Arabia.

"More than 1.5 million OFWs (overseas Filipino workers) are currently deployed in the region. Our compatriots stand to benefit from using a Metrobank remittance partner in these areas. Not only is it convenient, they know they can trust Metrobank to make sure that their hard-earned money reach their beneficiaries safely and fast," Araneta added.

The new remittance tie-ups complement Metrobank's vast network of cash transfer offices and correspondent banks worldwide.

"Most of our remittance hubs operate on extended hours and during weekends. This is advantageous for OFWs who don't have time to do transactions during regular banking hours," Araneta added.

Metrobank also opened Metro Remittance Center Inc. (Canada), its first remittance office in this country. It is expected to serve the requirements of overseas Filipinos, now numbering about 500,000, in North America.

To date, Metrobank has over 30 international branches and offices in Taiwan, Shanghai, Japan, Korea, Guam, the United States, Hong Kong, Singapore, Italy, UK, Spain and Austria.

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Join the "Winning Grant Proposal Writing" Seminar on Sept. 14, 2006, 8am—5pm, Richville Hotel, 286 EDSA, Mandaluyong City. Speakers are from **Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Pilipinas Shell Foundation, and TKCP.** Learn what funders look for in a proposal and where to source funding for your projects. Seminar Fee is ₱2,500. To register, call Tritium Knowledge Center Publishing (TKCP) at: 531-0084; 0919-229-9777; 0919-229-9780; 0915-780-4379 or email at: tritium@pldtdsl.net or tkcp_ph@yahoo.com

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IPVG posts ₱32-M loss

By Riza T. Olchondra

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY VENTURES Group Corp. or IPVG, a listed company engaged in IT and telecommunications, online gaming services and call center operations, saw its half-year net loss balloon due to huge operational expenses and investments in technology acquisition and upgrading.

The company reported to the Philippine Stock Exchange a total consolidated net loss of P32.66 million in the first half of 2006, or 24 percent higher than the loss of P9.35 million in the same period last year.

The group's total consolidated half-year revenue barely increased from P65.49 million to P65.01 million year-on-year.

IP Converge Data Center, IPVG's IT and telecommunication arm that delivers IT and integrated solutions to telcos and other corporate users, posted P57.94 million in revenue. It accounted for 85 percent of the total revenue of the group. Its online gaming arm, IP e-Games, contributed the other 15 percent.

Consolidated operating expenses increased by 365 percent to P46.45 million in the first half of the year from year-ago's P9.97 million.

IPVG's startup online gaming business was particularly expensive to run as it was still investing in building customer awareness and subscriber base.

In order to boost revenue, IPVG said it would continue to improve the quality and visibility of its online gaming venture, as well as the IT services it was providing such as global Internet access, co-location services and data center.

In the meantime, IP Converge Data Center obtained in July a commercial loan worth $600,000 which would be used to acquire new equipment for the data center.

IPVG is also in discussions with several groups for possible equity investments in either the parent company or the subsidiaries.

CEB starts flying to GenSan

CEBU PACIFIC (CEB) WILL OPEN daily flights to General Santos City starting Oct. 2 and will be using its brand-new Airbus A319 to service the new route.

The new service will be CEB's 19th domestic destination. The flight service departs from Manila at 1:35 p.m., arriving in General Santos at 3:20 p.m. The flight then leaves General Santos at 3:50 p.m. for its flight back to Manila.

Now on its 11th year, the airline has the youngest fleet in the Philippines and one of the youngest in Asia as it operates 11 brand new Airbus aircraft. The airline awaits the delivery of three more Airbus planes until February 2007 to complete its two year re-fleeting program.

"We are confident that our entry into this market will once again bring down the fares significantly. Now, the people in General Santos and its nearby towns will have a low-fare alternative with Cebu Pacific," CEB president and CEO Lance Y. Gokongwei said in a statement.

CEB will introduce its Manila-General Santos service with a seat sale fare of only P99 one-way. The sale will run from Aug. 29 to Sept. 5 and is good for travel from Oct. 2 to Dec. 15, 2006.

After the seat sale, the year-round "Go" fare to General Santos start at only P868 one-way, almost 60-percent lower than the current regular airfare. *Riza T. Olchondra*

RP firms eye Middle East deals

From page B1

means rising demand for woodworks and coverings.

The local firms include Grace Park International, Lightworks Resources, Madeka Stone Development Enterprises, Raphael Legacy, Teresa Marble and World Chem Enviro Technologies.

Teresa Marble has been operating for at least 25 years with a yearly output of 12,000 cubic meters, most of which are shipped to the United States and other parts of Asia.

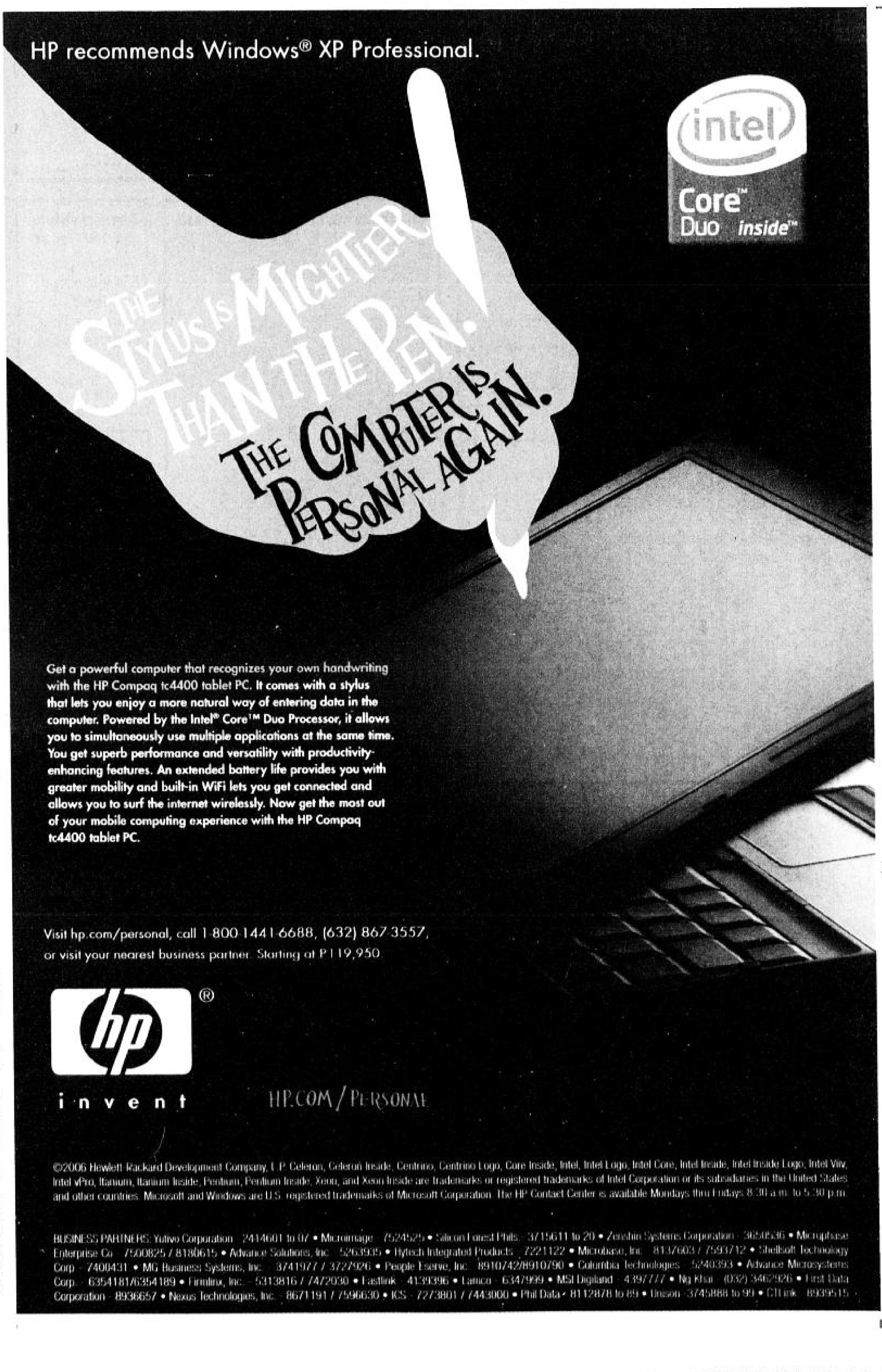
Grace Park International makes wooden kitchen system and is the country's sole maker of particle boards.

Lightworks Resources is known for earthenware and plans to introduce its line of bathroom sink as well as wall and floor tiles.

Madeka Stone distributes natural stones, slates, wood stones, shell stones and coco coir.

Raphael Legacy has a utility patent for its mosaic products and would feature Greek- and Roman-inspired mosaic tiles and floor tiles.

World Chem Enviro provides waste and wastewater treatment technologies, equipment and related process. It is aiming for a share of the United Arab Emirates' $7-billion spending for water resource development earmarked for the next 25 years.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Supreme Court
Halls of Justice – Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Supreme Court through the Halls of Justice – Bids and Awards Committee invites contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for:

Project : **Replacement of the Roof and Fabrication and Installation of Cabinets, Quezon City Hall of Justice**
Approved Budget : **P5,171,097.18**
Funding Source : **Judiciary Development Fund**
Completion Period : **Sixty (60) calendar days**

Eligibility forms shall be available upon submission of the Letter of Intent and Application for Eligibility at the Office on Halls of Justice, 7th Floor Centennial Bldg., Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila. Letters of Intent may likewise be sent through telefax number (02) 552-9590.

Interested bidders are advised to take note of the following schedules:

Submission of Letter of Intent and Application for Eligibility	September 7 to 13, 2006
Submission of Eligibility Requirements	September 21, 2006, 9:00 a.m. at the Office on Halls of Justice, Supreme Court
Issuance of Bid Documents	September 26 to October 3, 2006 *(to be secured from the Office on Halls of Justice upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,000.00)*
Pre Bid Conference	October 12, 2006, 9:00 a.m., Supreme Court
Submission and Opening of Bids	October 26, 2006, 9:00 a.m., Supreme Court

Award shall be made to the bidder who submits the lowest calculated responsive bid. Criteria for the eligibility check of the prospective bidders, examination and evaluation of bids and post-qualification and all matters relevant to this procurement shall be in accordance with Republic Act No. 9184 and its IRR.

For additional information, contact Atty. Peter John Javier or Engr. Arnold Paradero at (02) 552-9589 to 94 or send an e-mail to chojbac@yahoo.com.

The Supreme Court reserves the right to reject any or all bids or offers which it may consider to be disadvantageous and not beneficial to the Court or to waive any defect or informality therein.

August 30, 2006.

(Sgd.) **CHRISTOPHER O. LOCK**
Chairperson

(PDI- Aug. 30 & Sept. 6, 2006)

CAGAYAN 1 ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Maddarulug, Solana, Cagayan
Tel. Nos. 844-1596, 501-0062

INVITATION TO BID

The CAGAYAN 1 ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC., in compliance with the Energy Regulatory Commission invites eligible Bidders to supply a 10 megawatt (10MW) energy requirement for CAGELCO 1 franchise area commending in 2010. Due to the impending power shortages indicated in the Department of Energy (DOE) Power Development Plan, preference will be given to new and clean generation capacity to supply the energy requirements of CAGELCO 1 franchise area.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures. Interested bidders shall comply with Accreditation Requirements and submit Letter of Intent to:

PRE-BID AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
CAGAYAN 1 MAIN OFFICE
Maddarulug, Solana, Cagayan
Telephone Nos. 078-844-1595; 501-0062, 501-0882
Fax No. 078-844-4528
E-mail address: cagelco1@yahoo.com

Bidding requirements and schedule of activities are as follows:

BIDDING SCHEDULE	
Release of Invitation to Bid (two publications)	August 30, 2006 and September 06, 2006
Intent to Respond Forms Due	September 14, 2006
Accreditation Period	September 15 to 24, 2006
Pre-Bid Conference	October 01, 2006
Conduct of Public Bidding	October 11, 2006

Cost of Bidding Documents (non refundable) – Php 10,000.00

CAGELCO 1 hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formalities therein and to accept such bid as may be considered advantageous to the cooperative.

(Sgd.) **NENITA B. GUZMAN**
PBAC Chairman

(PDI – Aug. 30 & Sept. 6, 2006)

NOTICE

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE
DISTRICT COURT DIVISION
COUNTY OF WAKE
FILE NO. 06 SP 2405
IN RE: THE ADOPTION OF PAXTON EDWARD ONSTOTT

TO: DAVID WESLEY ONSTOTT

Take notice that a Special Proceeding has been commenced against you in the above referenced court and file. The Petitioner is seeking to adopt a male child who was born on May 19, 2001, in Sacramento, CA to Tracy Rae Johansen . This child was conceived on or about June 2000.

In order to participate in and receive further notice of the proceeding, including notice of the time and place of any hearing in this matter, you must file a response to the petition with the Wake Country Clerk of Superior Court, Post Office Box 351, Raleigh, North Carolina 27602. within forty (40) days of service on or before September 25, 2006.

IN THE EVENT YOU FAIL TO RESPOND THE PETITIONERS WILL ASK THE COURT FOR THE RELIEF SOUGHT WITHOUT FURTHER NOTICE TO YOU. THE ORDER FOR TERMINATION WILL TERMINATE YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS TO THIS CHILD AND DIVEST YOU OF ALL RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE CHILD.

You should provide a copy of any response to the attorney for the Petitioner at the address indicated below.

Bobby D. Mills, Post Office Box 1677, Raleigh, North Carolina 27602 (919) 821-1860.

(PDI – August 16, 23 & 30, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
(RE-ADVERTISEMENT)

The Department of Transportation and Communications advertised on 09 & 15 August 2006 an Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid for the Laguindingan Airport Development Project (Construction of Access Road) with an Approved Budget for the Contract of P188,768,270.74 to all firms/joint venture holding a PCAB license of General Engineering Large A for Airports and Highways.

In view of the typographical error which was inadvertently committed, the Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid advertised on the aforementioned dates is amended to include all firms and voluntarily formed joint ventures holding a Large B PCAB License of General Engineering for Airports and Highways.

The issuance of Request for Eligibility Screening (RES Form 1) is extended from 06 to 12 September 2006.

Interested bidders shall submit their duly accomplished RES Form 1 and bring the original copy of the updated PCAB/IAC License and Letter of Intent to the BAC Secretariat, Office of the BAC Chairman for Foreign Assisted Air Transportation Sector Projects, Unit 61, 6th Floor, The Columbia Tower, Ortigas Ave., Mandaluyong City not later than 2:00 PM on 18 September 2006.

Due to this re-advertisement, the revised schedule of issuance, submission, and opening of bids are as follows:

Issuance of bid documents	– 10 to 16 October 2006
Deadline of submission of bidding documents	– 16 November 2006, not later than 2:00 P.M. at the same address above
Opening of Bids	– will immediately follow after the cut-off date and time of submission of bids.

Lastly, we shall refund accordingly the payment made for the purchase of RES Form I to those firms with PCAB License of General Engineering Large A for Airports and Highways.

(Sgd.) **ROBERT R. CASTAÑARES**
Assistant Secretary and PBAC Chairman
Foreign Assisted Air Transportation Projects

(PDI–Aug. 30 & Sept. 6, 2006)

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE DESK OFFICERS
(within Quezon City)

Applicants must be:

- graduate of any 4-year degree, preferably in Communication Arts or Social Sciences
- computer literate (Microsoft Access/Web page)
- female, 5'4" in height
- not more than 25 years old
- with pleasing personality
- articulate/fluent in English
- preferably can speak at least 2 dialects apart from Tagalog

Send your resumé with scanned picture to:
ready_action_line@yahoo.com
or fax to (02) 922-7767

Deadline of submission : **September 4, 2006**

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The LGU of Godod, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project	**Purchase of 70 units Computer with Complete Accessories & Printer**
Location	**Godod, Zamboanga del Norte**
Approved Budget For the Contract	**P5,000,000.00**
Contract Duration	**60 days**
Delivery Period	**Within 15 days after issuance of Notice of Award**

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last [state number of years, minimum 2] with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contracts shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities		*Schedule*
1.	Issuance of Bid Documents	August 18-31, 2006
2.	Pre-bid Conference	September 1, 2006
3.	Opening of Bids	September 12, 2006
4	Bid Evaluation	September 13-19, 2006
5	Post-qualification	September 20-26, 2006

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P2,000.00 to the Municipal Treasurer.

The LGU assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) ROMULO B. LOMOCSO
BAC Chairman

(PDI - Aug. 24 & 30, 2006)

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36 WEST AVE., 77 VIS. AVE., QC.

WESTERN VISAYAS MEDICAL CENTER
Mandurriao, Iloilo City
Fax No. 321-1797
E-mail Address: wvmc@pldtdsl.net

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Health (DOH) - Western Visayas Medical Center through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of the Project:	Supply and delivery of Various Pharmaceuticals
Location:	Western Visayas Medical Center
Brief Description:	The Bidder shall provide the supply and delivery of Various Pharmaceuticals
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC):	Php 5,722,071.10
Contract Duration :	6 months
Delivery Period :	Within fifteen days after receipt of each Purchase Order

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the preliminary Examination of Bids shall be non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Awards of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	September 08 - 21, 2006
2. Pre-bid Conference	September 22, 2006
Time and Place of Pre-bid Conference	9:00 a.m., Executive Conference Room, WVMC, Iloilo City
3. Submission of Letters of Intent and Application for Eligibility (if single-stage bidding is used, delete this activity)	N/A
4. Opening of Bids	October 04, 2006
Time and Place of the Opening of Bids	9:00 a.m. Executive Conference Room, WVMC, Iloilo City
5. Bid Evaluation	October 19, 2006
6. Post-qualification	October 26, 2006
7. Notice of Award	November 10, 2006

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 3,000.00 to the DOH-Western Visayas Medical Center cashier.

The DOH-Western Visayas Medical Center assumes no responsibility, whatsoever, to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Date of Publication: August 30, 2006 and September 10, 2006
Newspaper:

Approved:
(Sgd.) FREIDA G. SORONGON, RN, MAN
BAC-CHAIRMAN

(PDI–Aug. 30 & Sept. 10, 2006)

CAGELCO II

INVITATION TO BID

The **CAGAYAN II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**, in compliance with the Energy Regulatory Commission's (ERC) "Guidelines for Recovery of Costs for the Generation Component of Distribution Utilities Rates", which took effect on May 9, 2004, invites potential bidders - Existing or New Generation Companies – to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply of CAGELCO II's partial electricity requirements in the nominal capacity of approximately 12,000 kilowatts (kW).

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures. Interested bidders shall comply with Accreditation Requirements and submit Letter of Intent to:

PRE-BID AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
CAGAYAN II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
MACANAYA DISTRICT, APARRI, CAGAYAN
Telefax Nos. 078-888-2940 / 078-888-2941
E-MAIL ADDRESS: cagelco2main@digitelone.com

Bidding requirements and schedule of activities are as follows:

BIDDING SCHEDULE	
Release of Invitation to Bid (two publications)	August 30, 2006 and September 06, 2006
Intent to Respond Forms Due	September 14, 2006
Accreditation Period	September 15 to 24, 2006
Pre-Bid Conference	October 01, 2006
Conduct of Public Bidding	October 11, 2006

Cost of Bidding Documents (non refundable) – Php 10,000.00

CAGELCO II reserves the right to reject any or all bids without any reason, to waive any formalities therein, to accept proposal most advantageous to the cooperative and to assume no obligation to compensate or indemnify any bidder for expenses or losses that may be incurred in the preparation of bid nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) BLANDINA Y. MADAMBA
ISD Manager /PBAC Chairman

(PDI – Aug. 30 & Sept. 6, 2006)

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City 1634
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5285

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

11,000 Gallons of Normal Pentane Under FUM 63712
Approved Budget: PHP 10,196,950.00

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o **Roderick R. Cabantog** starting **August 23, 2006** from 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P400.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **August 31, 2006, 2:00 p.m.** at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply, Property and Materials Management Division at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Department Office Wall Clock Time)** on **September 14, 2006**. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Late bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee !

(PDI--August 23 & 30, 2006)

ERRATUM

In the Invitation to Bid ad of PNOC-Energy Development Corporation published last August 23, 2006 re: Supply & Delivery of 11,000 Gallons of Normal Pentane Under FUM 63712, approved budget for the contract should be **Php10,196,950.00** and not as published.

PNOC-EDC

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS
and bank-to-bank payments

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
REQUIEMS

"To Jesus, Though Mary"

GLICERIA OLORES y ROJALES

who peacefully joined her Creator on the 27th of August 2006 at the age of 85.

Her remains lie in state at 108 Hugo Ilagan, Indang, Cavite.

Interment will be on September 2, 2006, Saturday, at 3:00 p.m. at the Roman's Memorial Garden, Indang, Cavite.

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord." Matthew 10:39

"In Christ all shall be made alive..." Corinthians 15:22

Edward Ventura Gatan

Joined his Creator on 28 August 2006
at the age of 45.

His bereaved wife **Rosemarie Lat Gatan** and daughter **Anne Michelle Gatan** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Inc., G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, September 2, 2006 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANILA
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

on the 40th day of the passing away of

Cordella Llamas De los Santos

(December 31, 1919 – July 22, 2006)
VICE-CHAIRMAN, UM BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Her bereaved husband **Virgilio**; children **Ernesto**, **Cynthia** and **Tomas**, **Ramona**, grandchildren, relatives, friends, and the UM Community will offer a Holy Mass at 11:00 a.m., today, August 30, 2006 at The University of Manila Chapel, Dr. M.V. de los Santos St., Sampaloc, Manila.

We thank you all for joining us in our prayers for her eternal rest.

A Better Place

There's a place I've never seen beyond this world we know,
A place I've only heard of but someday hope to go
It's not on any map, there are no roads to take me there,
But it's a place of perfect peace where hearts are free from care.
And though I understand some may be saddened when I leave,
One day, we all will meet again that's what I believe
When it's time to travel there, I think I'll wear a smile,
I'll say good-bye to those I love, but only for a while,
Knowing there are others who have traveled there alone,
Who cannot wait to greet me & whisper "Welcome home."

In Loving Memory
Twenty Second Death Anniversary of

CLEMENTE S. GATMAITAN, SR.

M.D., M.P.H.

who died in the Grace of our Lord
on August 30, 1984 at the age of 78 years old.

His bereaved children, **Natividad** and **Deogracias**, **Clemente, Jr.** and **Concepcion**, **Escolastico** and **Erna**; grandchildren, great grandchildren and other relatives request the pious readers to offer prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

Holy Masses will be offered today, August 30, 2006 at:

6:00 a.m.	St. Francis Church, Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City
7:00 a.m.	Sacred Heart Parish Church, Scout Ybardolaza, Kamuning, Q.C.
12:00 p.m.	Makati Medical Center Chapel, Makati City
6:00 p.m.	Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS and bank-to-bank payments

OTHELLO NUQUI BALUYUT

of Macabebe, Pampanga & California, USA.

Peacefully joined his Creator on
August 27, 2006, at the age of 62.

His loving wife **Celia (†)**; children **Pearlie Rose**, **Othello, Jr.**, **Teresa & Louella (†)**; parents **Juan (†) & Apolonia (†)**; sisters **Charminia Banal & Marlene Scott** and brothers **Johnny**, **Agileo** and **Rolando (†)**; brothers and sisters-in-law, nephews & nieces, grandchildren, other relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Christ the King Parish Church, Greenmeadows, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Friday, September 1, 2006, in Liliw, Laguna after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the CTK Parish Church.

Peace my heart...

Peace, my heart, let the time for the parting be sweet.
Let it not be a death but completeness.
Let love melt into memory and pain into songs.
Let the flight through the sky end in the folding of the wings over the nest.
Let the last touch of your hands be gentle like the flower of the night.
Stand still, O Beautiful End, for a moment, and say your last words in silence.
I bow to you and hold up my lamp to light you on your way.

~Rabindranath Tagore

We send you off with prayerful goodbyes
and gratitude for your life
and loving faith that God's angels guide your flight.

Benjamin "Butch" M. Marco

Has peacefully joined our Creator on August 27, 2006 at the age of 56.

His wife Tootsie, and children Marina & Rene, Bianca & Rommel,
Mico, Hanna, Angelo and Gaby, his grandchildren, Lia, Javi, Andi and Billy,
and his siblings, Tony, Rorit, Nena, Asa, Carlos, Chiqui, and Joey
request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Sanctuario de San Jose, East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City.

Funeral mass at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 02, 2006
will be at Manila Memorial Park Main Chapel, Sucat, Parañaque.
Interment to follow.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

BEN SIN ONG

(a.k.a. Ong Sin Ben)

who joined his Creator on August 11, 2006

sincerely convey our deepest gratitude
and appreciation to all those who offered
Masses and prayers, sent flowers,
visited and kept vigil, attended
the funeral rites and condoled with us
in our moment of grief.

And thinking of him as living in the hearts
of those he touched... for no love is ever lost
as he was loved so much...

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith (2 Timothy 4)

6th SM Bowling Cup opens

THE 6TH SM BOWLING CUP officially opened recently at the SM Megamall, and is ongoing at all SM Bowling centers in Megamall, North Edsa, Fairview, and Cebu until May 2007.

This year, the prestigious tournament will be giving away even bigger prizes: a brand new Isuzu Crosswind XUVi A/T, three Asian luxury cruises from Star Cruises, and P100,000 for every perfect game played; and Ciudad Christia Resort gift certificates worth P100,000. Monthly winners will each receive P20,000.

Participants also have a chance to win exciting prizes in the grand raffle draw, which will be held during the national finals. These include exercise equipment, bowling bags from BOSS Proshop, four Hidalgo Dirt Bikes from Manila Imperial Motorsales, and two family trips to Boracay from SM Advantage Card.

Sponsors for the 6th SM bowling Cup are Isuzu Philippines, Accel Sports, Pepsi Cola Bottlers, Nature's Spring, Boysen, Ciudad Christia Resort, SM Advantage Card, Generali Philippines, Indtech, Johnson Diversey, Star Cruises, and AMF Puyat.

RAOUL Miranda was awarded a plaque by SM's VP for Leisure Inc Ric Camaligan and SM Bowling Center assistant division manager Cidric Panganiban for having a perfect game June 20 during the 5th SM Bowling Cup.

Another win against hypertension

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE REmains one of the most prevalent cardiovascular problems in the country. According to the National Nutrition and Health Survey, 7 million Filipinos suffer from hypertension. Inadequately controlled high blood pressure can cause serious long-term complications, such as heart problems which may lead to death. NNHes also reported that diseases of the heart are the number one cause of death in the Philippines.

Sadly, treatment non-compliance is one of the major reasons most patients cannot effectively manage their blood pressure. The primary reason for this is the high cost of medicine. For instance, amlodipine, which is a proven drug for hypertension, costs P77 per tablet. For a minimum wage earner, this amount eats a sizeable portion of the income.

As a result, meeting the required dosage of a medicine takes a backseat in favor of the other needs of the patient.

There are reports that Therapharma, a division of United Laboratories, filed an application for a license to market a new brand of amlodipine which will be marketed at 50 percent less than the prevailing price of the originator brand. Knowing Therapharma which has been an advocate of the pharmacoeconomics campaign, this product will surely be a safe, effective and affordable solution for hypertension.

When made available to the market, hypertensive patients will have an effective and safe choice to manage their blood pressure. This will pave the way for improved treatment compliance among hypertensive patients, which will eventually turn into better blood pressure management. In addition, hypertensive patients will also prevent costly complications brought about by uncontrolled blood pressure. The new amlodipine will provide a smart choice for hypertensive patients, which will help prolong lives.

In a country where hypertension is prevalent and majority of the population is poor, the introduction of a safe, effective and affordable medicine is a welcome change. More and more Filipino patients are clamoring for local pharmaceutical companies, especially Unilab, to provide them with effective medicines at a price they can afford.

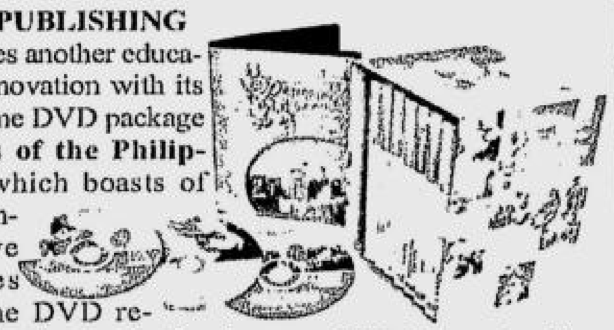
CELEBRITY CLUB LADIES' DOUBLES TENNIS TEAM

Team members (back row, from left) Claudia Alo, Emily Franco, Agnes Dayao, Susan Lopez-Dee and Rose Neri, (front row) Glenda Garcia and Liza Nava placed 1st runner-up in the 2006 Palms Country Club Invitational and are now participating in the Wongies Cup 2006 at the Rizal Racquet Club in Pasig, Metro Manila.

Wonder of a miracle bed

NUGABEST PHILIPPINES CO opened its first branch early 2005 in Greenhills, San Juan. In barely one-and-a-half years, it has expanded to 10 branches in Metro Manila, seven in the northern area, 2 in the south, and a newly opened one at Pasay City. As a global company, Nugabest from Korea has branches in over 50 countries, and has earned ISO certificates. The recently opened Pasay branch has recorded a number of miracles with its Therapeutic Thermal Bed. Eva Reyes, who had glaucoma, received several treatments with Nugabest. This saved her from total blindness. Nugabest staff display warmth and affection to patients for them to achieve a good state of mind and readily receive treatment. The "miracle" Thermal Bed works based primarily on concepts of Oriental medicine, namely Moxibustion (application of heat to energy points in the body without burning the skin), chiropractic alignment of the spine using far infrared rays transmitted by Jade stone rollers, and acupressure using deep, soothing massage. Pasay branch owners Mr and Ms Dennis Kahm contributes to a healthier Filipino community, upholding the Nugabest mission of "health, love and best service" to Filipinos.

Regions of the Phils. DVDs on Sale at the Book Fair



VIBAL PUBLISHING introduces another educational innovation with its 10-volume DVD package **Regions of the Philippines**, which boasts of unique interactive features using the DVD remote control as navigational tool.

The one-of-a-kind collection is one of the products on sale at the ongoing Book Fair at the World Trade Center. The new multimedia product allows users to explore the 17 regions of the Philippines through videos and photo galleries, and take quizzes and discover interesting trivia on the Philippines.

VIBAL, a leading publisher of quality educational textbooks and other instructional materials for over 50 years, is in the forefront of the development and production of local multimedia curriculum support materials (CSMs).

For more information on the Regions DVDs, please call 7129156 to 59 or log on to www.vibalpublishing.com.

Pinoy Superheroes Now in Coloring Books

Stimulate your kid's creativity through coloring books on the newest superhero show to hit Philippine TV.

Super Inggo Coloring Book and Activity Book series captures the adventures of the superhero that airs this week on prime time TV. Your kids will surely enjoy coloring the illustrations based on the characters of the show.

Featured are the show's key characters–Super Inggo, Boi Bawang, Ava Avanico, Ken, Teg, and others.

Each book in the series has 16 pages of fun-filled activities providing opportunities for children to learn while having fun. Buy the complete set and get free coloring books at Vibal Publishing booths.

messages

Warmest felicitation to the organizers, guests and participants in The 27th Manila International Book Fair.

I congratulate the organizers of this endeavor for promoting books as the best reading informative material for all. Undertakings such as this significantly impact our efforts to encourage everyone, especially the youth, to gain knowledge and appreciate facts from books and a wide selection of reading materials. This is surely a most effective way to eradicate illiteracy, thereby boosting the economy of our country.

I am confident that this event will be met with much success, with participants, exhibitors and visitors mutually discovering the opportunities and benefits of reading books. May this activity eventually lead to a greater awareness and interest among Filipino consumers.

More power and may this event be a resounding success. *Mabuhay!*

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

I invite everyone to participate in the 27th Manila International Book Fair, and to take this as an opportunity to recapture the love of books we first acquired as children.

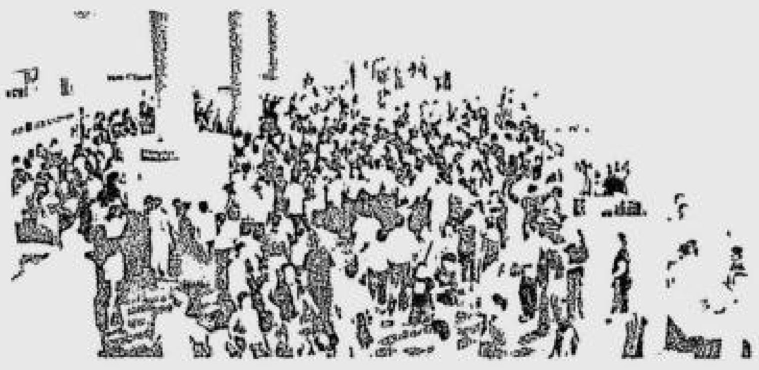
Books are still an essential element of social development, especially as the carriers of values and traditions. Hence, the publishing industry, the academe, the government and other stakeholders should cooperate to promote book reading among our youth. As the theme of this year's event appropriately puts it, we have to "Make it a Habit" to read books.

Today that task is made more challenging by the fact that books have to compete against various other media. Yet we have to take on this task if we are to uphold the stability and the development of our nation through our children.

I sincerely appreciate the effort of Primetrade Asia, Inc. for this powerhouse event that brings together different book developers and affiliated entrepreneurs. This affair is truly valuable in our quest for a strong republic. Rest assured that I remain supportive of this endeavor.

Mabuhay!

NOLI "KABAYAN" DE CASTRO
Vice President
Republic of the Philippines

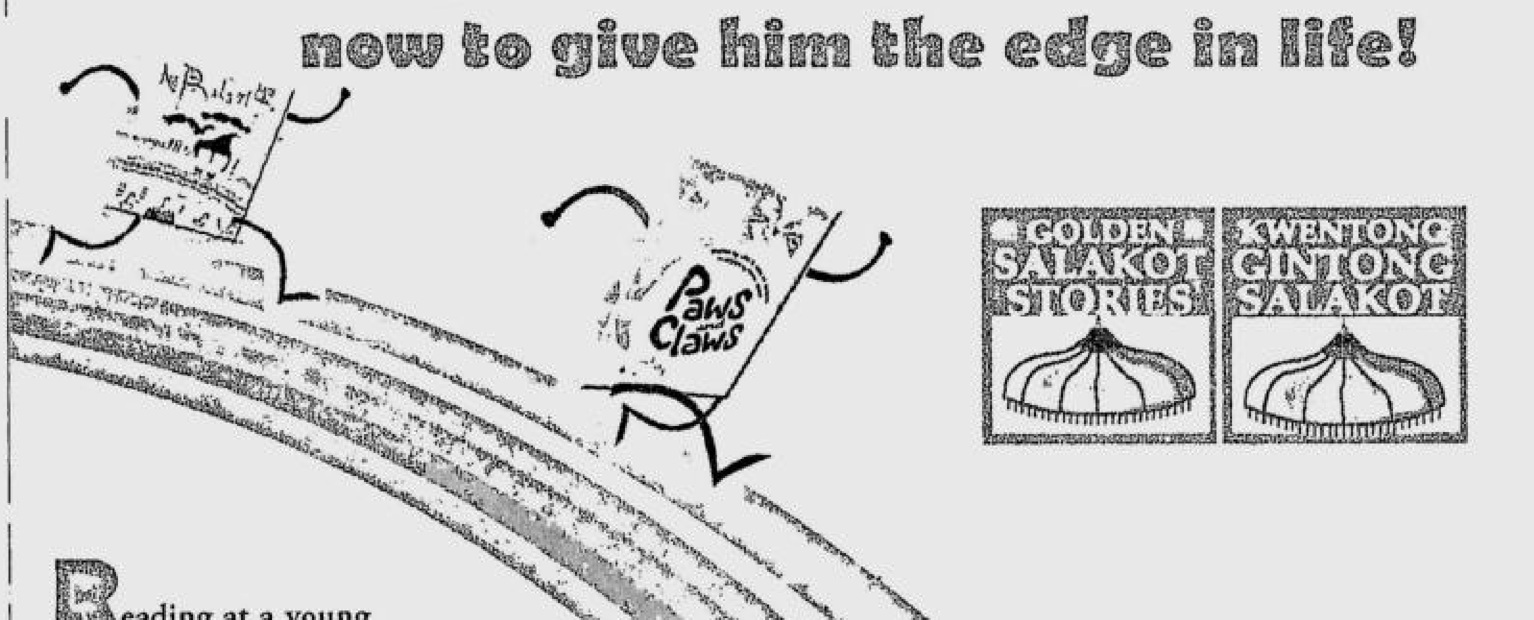


Passion for Education
VIBAL
PUBLISHING HOUSE, INC.

Come and visit us at the 27th Manila International Book Fair and find exciting Golden Salakot and Gintong Salakot storybooks and other curriculum support materials for your child!

A storytelling session and an art workshop also await you on Saturday, Sept. 2, 5-6 pm at the Function Room B.

Let your child experience reading now to give him the edge in life!



Reading at a young age sets the foundation for a child to achieve academic as well as lifelong success.

The Golden Salakot and Gintong Salakot storybooks of Vibal Publishing House help instill the love of reading at an early age with delightful stories livened up by colorful and magical illustrations.

The storybooks form part of Vibal Publishing's increased advocacy for reading—a life skill that is vital in language development, enhanced creativity, a healthy sense of curiosity, and increased knowledge retention among others, which can also translate to a higher level of academic performance in children.

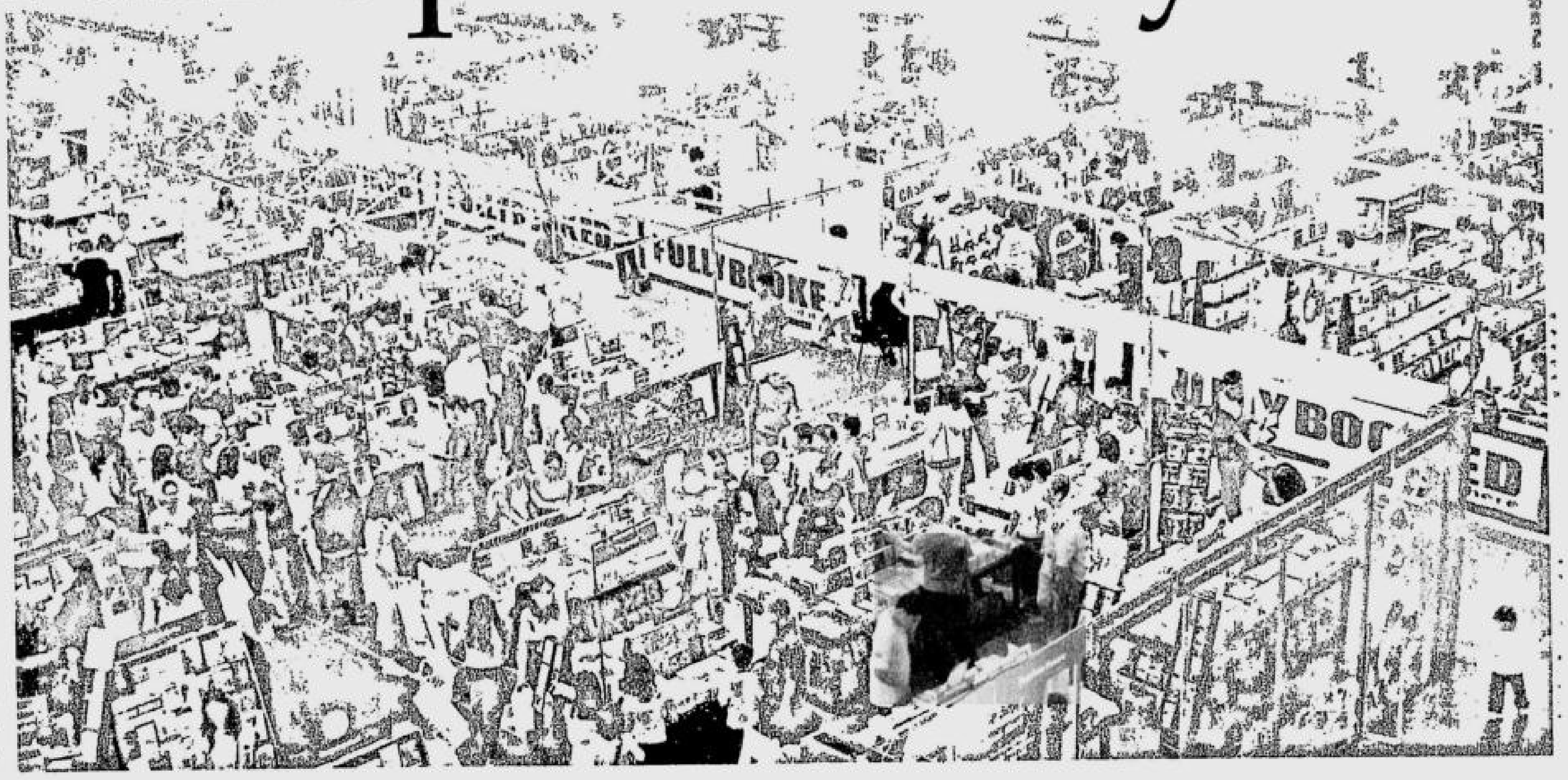
New Golden Salakot titles now available are "Paws and Claws," "Why Do Birds Build Nests?," "When Time Turned" and "Going Back." Meanwhile, Gintong Salakot titles just off the press are "Mariang Sinukuan," "Mga Selyo ni Lolo Benicio," "Maningning," "Ang Aking Pamilya, "Ang Bahaghari" and "May Alaga Akong Butanding."

The storybooks are written by some of the country's award-winning authors and illustrated by some of the best Filipino artists for children. In fact, "Baha" (story by Eugene Evasco and illustrations by Frances Alcaraz) is a finalist for the 2006 National Book Awards' Children's Literature category.

Mariang Sinukuan

For discounted Golden and Gintong Salakot storybooks, visit the Vibal Publishing booths at the 27th Manila International Book Fair from Aug. 30 to Sept. 3, 2006 at the World Trade Center in Pasay City.

27th Manila International Book Fair opens today



The biggest names in the publishing industry are set to gather anew for the 27th Manila International Book Fair (MIBF), the country's paramount event for the book business. The MIBF celebrates the written word at the World Trade Center Metro Manila, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue corner Roxas Boulevard, from Aug. 30 to Sept. 3.

With the theme "Make it a Habit" the MIBF once again unites local and foreign publishers, wholesalers, retailers, book lovers and collectors, librarians, authors, publishers' representatives, and every major player in the publishing industry in its continuing efforts to promote books and reading.

Attended by more than 50,000 people last year, the MIBF showcases the largest and most varied collection of literature, textbooks, educational supplements, general references, religious and inspirational titles, self-help books, management books, Filipiniana, coffee table books, popular novels, children's books, art books, graphic novels, rare and hard-to-find titles, magazines, audio and e-books, multimedia, teaching supplies and services, publishers' technology, and travel materials.

Now on its 27th year, the MIBF renews its commitment to stage the biggest book event in the country, bringing out the best in the book trade while holding creative special events designed to complement the industry and to delight book-lovers as well.

The 27th Manila International Book Fair is organized by Primetrade Asia, Inc in partnership with Asian Catholic Publishers Inc, Book Development Association of the Philippines, Philippine Booksellers Association Inc, and Publishers Representatives Organization of the Philippines. It is supported by the Philippine Educational Publishers Association, Book Exporters Association of the Philippines, and the Christian Booksellers Association - Philippine Chapter.

For details, call 896-0661 or 610-08710, or e-mail bookfair@primetradeasia.com

> With the theme 'Make it a Habit' the MIBF once again unites local and foreign publishers, wholesalers, retailers, book lovers and collectors, librarians, authors

OPENS TODAY!

The 27th MANILA INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR

August 30 - September 3, 2006 • 10:00 AM - 8:00 PM
World Trade Center Metro Manila, Financial Center Area
Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue corner D. Macapagal Blvd., Pasay City

ORGANIZED BY: Primetrade Asia, Inc.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH: Asian Catholic Communicators, Inc. • Book Development Association of the Philippines • Philippine Booksellers Association, Inc. • Publishers' Representatives Organization of the Philippines

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  Merit Paper Products
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Philonline
Phoenix Educational Systems, Inc.
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Precious Pages Corp.
Psicom Publishing, Inc.
Rarebook Enterprises
Rex Book Store, Inc.
Roman Instructional Media Resources, Inc.
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St Pauls
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The Catholic Book Center
The Publishers & Booksellers Association
  of Thailand
The University of the Philippines Press
Thomson Learning
Tradewinds Books
Tzu Chi Foundation
UST Publishing House
Vacation Club International
Vibal Publishing House, Inc.
Vietnam Association of Publishers, Printers
  and Distributors
WS Pacific Publications, Inc.
Word & Life Publications
World Health Organization

SCHEDULE OF SPECIAL EVENTS

DAY1-August 30, 2006, Wednesday

10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
World Trade Center Lobby
The 27th Manila International Book Fair Opening Ceremony

1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Function Room B
Forum on "E-Books, E-Library, E-Publishing"
Speakers: Mrs. Salvacion M. Arlante,
Ms. Jean Tiu Lim & Mr. Aaron Joshua Tiu
by Philippine Association of Academic and Research Librarians

1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Activity Area
Bare Hands Reflexology
by Bagong Henerasyon Foundation, Inc.

1:30 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
World Trade Center Seminar Room 1
Forum: Expanding Marketing Coverage in the ASEAN Region through the Development of a Common Language while Retaining the Language of the Culture
by Book Exporters Association of the Phils. and Phil. Educational Publishers Association

2:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Function Room A
Call to Faith: Religion Teacher Seminar
Speaker: Ms. Suzanne Hwang
by Felta Multi-Media, Inc.

3:00 P.M. - 5:30 P.M.
Activity Area
Spa Training
by Bagong Henerasyon Foundation, Inc.

4:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.
Function Room B
Dianetics Introductory Lecture
by New Era International Publication Aps and the Church of Scientology Mission of the Philippines

5:00 P.M. - 6:30 P.M.
Function Room A
Power Dressing with Fashion Show
by Cora Doloroso Career Centre

5:30 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.
Function Room B
Project Presentation of American Institute for Learnings by National Book Development Board

5:30 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.
Makati Skyline
Gintong Aklat Awarding Ceremonies (By Invitation)
by Book Development Association of the Phils.

DAY 2-August 31, 2006, Thursday

10:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.
Function Room A
Successful Job Hunting Tips
by Cora Doloroso Career Centre

10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Function Room B
Sparking the Filipinos' Imagination: Nation-Building Through Library Excellence. A Culture of Reading, and Inspiring Filipino Stories
Speaker: Fr. Teodolo P. Gonzales, SJ
by University of the Philippines Library and Information Science Alumni Association

11:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Function Room A
Corporate Manners with Fashion Show
by Cora Doloroso Career Centre

1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Activity Area
Learn and Have Fun: An Interactive/Hands-On Experience by Verve Multimedia, Inc.

1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Function Room A
C & E Publishing/ Thomson Gale Launching of Online Products

1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.
Function Room B
Seminar on The Role of Blogging in the Librarianship: Pros and Cons
Speaker: Ms. Zarah Grace Gagatiga
by Association of Special Libraries of the Phils.

2:30 P.M. - 4:30 P.M.
Activity Area
Spa Training by Bagong Henerasyon Fdn., Inc.

4:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.
Function Room B
Dianetics Introductory Lecture
by New Era International Publication Aps and the Church of Scientology Mission of the Philippines

4:00 P.M. - 6:30 P.M.
Makati Skyline
National Book Awards (By Invitation)
by Manila Critics Circle

4:30 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.
Activity Area
Bare Hands Reflexology
by Bagong Henerasyon Foundation, Inc.

5:00 P.M. - 6:30 P.M.
Function Room A
Caregiver/Nursing Primer Course
by Cora Doloroso Career Centre

DAY 3-September 1, 2006, Friday

10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Function Room A
Forum on the Interconnectivity of Reading and Civic Involvement. Book Talk: Twelve Little Things Every Filipino Can Do To Help Our Country by Atty. Alexander L. Lacson by Phil. Librarians Association, Inc. and Phil. Booksellers Association, Inc.

10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Function Room B
Forum on Book Writing, Publishing and Selling
by Philippine Group of Law Librarians

1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Function Room A
Teaching for Change: Seminar on Transformative Education. Speaker: Mr. Onofre Pagsanghan
by C & E Publishing, Inc.

1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Function Room B
Lecture-Forum on Reinventing Information Literacy
Speakers: Ms. Zarah Grace Gagatiga and Mr. Reno C. Romero by Philippine Association of Teachers of Library Science and Information Science

1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Activity Area
Story Telling by Edcrisch International, Inc.

3:30 P.M. - 5:30 P.M.
Function Room A
Health, Beauty and Wellness by Medical & Health Librarians Association of the Philippines

3:30 P.M. - 5:30 P.M.
Activity Area
Spa Training by Bagong Henerasyon Foundation, Inc.

4:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.
Function Room B
Dianetics Introductory Lecture
by New Era International Publication Aps and the Church of Scientology Mission of the Philippines

5:30 P.M. - 7:30 P.M.
Function Room B
Book Launching by TESDA/Anvil Publishing, Inc.

6:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.
Makati Skyline
2006 Grand Book Launch and 49th Anniversary Celebration (By Invitation) by OMF Literature, Inc.

6:30 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.
Function Room A
Power Dressing with Fashion Show
by Cora Doloroso Career Centre

DAY 4-September 2, 2006, Saturday

10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Function Room B
Launch of OMF Literature's Golden Year Writing Competition (By Invitation) by OMF Literature, Inc.

11:30 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.
Activity Area
Spa Training by Bagong Henerasyon Foundation, Inc.

12:00 NN - 5:30 P.M.
Function Room A
27th National Quiz Bee - Manila and Pasay City Division Championship by Quiz Bee Foundation

1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Function Room B
Hiyas Children's Books: Story Telling and Author Signing by OMF Literature, Inc.

2:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Activity Area
Robotics Demonstration by Felta Multi-Media, Inc.

3:30 P.M. - 4:30 P.M.
Function Room B
Dianetics Introductory Lecture
by New Era International Publication Aps and the Church of Scientology Mission of the Philippines

4:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.
Activity Area
More than a Story featuring Ms. Melody Remorca
by Bookwagon

5:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.
Function Room B
Story Telling by Vibal Publishing House, Inc.

6:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.
Function Room B
Book Launching by St Pauls

DAY 5-September 3, 2006, Sunday

10:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.
Function Room A
Successful Job Hunting Tips
by Cora Doloroso Career Centre

11:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Function Room A
Corporate Manners with Fashion Show
by Cora Doloroso Career Centre

11:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Function Room B
Book Launching, Film Showing and Presentation of Supreme Sign by Eternal Publication

1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Activity Area
Spa Training by Bagong Henerasyon Foundation, Inc.

1:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.
Function Room A
Pistang Panitik
By Anvil Publishing, Inc. & Unyon Ng Mga Manunulat sa Pilipinas/Linangan sa Imahen, Retorika at Anyo: University of the Philippines Liknaan: UP Institute of Creative Writing: UP Quill: UP UGAT: UP Writers Club: Ateneo de Manila University Press: Ateneo Institute of Literary Arts and Practices (AILAP): De La Salle University Bienvenido Santos Creative Writing Center; University of Sto. Tomas Publishing House: Thomasian Writers Guild; UST Center for Creative Writing and Research

1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Function Room B
Modeling for Beginners
by Cora Doloroso Career Centre

3:00 P.M. - 5:30 P.M.
Activity Area
Bare Hands Reflexology
by Bagong Henerasyon Foundation, Inc.

4:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.
Function Room B
Dianetics Introductory Lecture
by New Era International Publication Aps and the Church of Scientology Mission of the Philippines

6:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.
Function Room B
Mass

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The 'highs' and 'lows' of budget cars

By Tessa R. Salazar

(Second of three parts)

LAST WEEK INQUIRER Motoring began its head-to-head comparison among three of the most conspicuous budget cars available in the country today—the Hyundai Getz 1.1, Kia Picanto 1.1 and Chevy Spark 1.0. All priced below P500,000, the cars were test-driven and scrutinized in an attempt to reveal the estimated cost of running and maintaining these so-called "budget cars."

Frequently changed spare parts

	Spark 1.0	Getz 1.1	Picanto 1.1
Oil Filter	P193	P162.40	P191
Fuel Filter	P520	P190.75	P310
Air Filter	P405	P297	P 472
Micro filter pollen filter	P891	P947.75	P740.85
Spark plugs	P149/piece	P131.40/piece	P165/piece
Brake Pads front	P2,062	P2,421.20	P1,503.43
Shoe and lining kit-rear	P2,410	P1,745.85	P1769.69
Alternator Belt	P451	P303.60	P296
Power steering belt	P 580	P209.40	P494
Clutch Disc	P1,943	P2,097.30	P2,666
Pressure Plate	P2,134	P1,490.90	P2044
Release Bearing	P1,564	P1028.15	P697
Wiper Blade LH	P335	P138.60	P544.37
Wiper Blade RH	P335	P92.95	P514.80
Spare parts warranty	1 yr or 20,000 km	1 yr or 20,000km	6 months or 10,000km
Vehicle warranty	3 yrs or 100,000 km	3 yrs or 100,000	3 years or 110,000 km

*PRICES AS OF AUG. 30, 2006

Now, we reveal the prices of original equipment manufactured parts that would most likely be changed more frequently over the course of the cars' useful life (please see chart). The full service menus offered by the "casas" (authorized service centers) can be checked at the dealerships.

Since no two drivers are alike, INQUIRER Motoring cannot predict exactly when the maintenance checks would be conducted. It all depends on how you drive, how long your vehicle runs at a given time, and the road conditions you subject your cars in. Everything here are estimates.

Generally, oil filters are replaced every 5,000 to 7,500 km. Other mechanics would put that into a time frame of about four times a year, or every three months. Other frequently replaced parts would be fuel and air filters, spark plugs (four in each car) and the V-ribbed belt or alternator belt.

Other parts needing periodic changes are the power steering belt, clutch disc, clutch cover or pressure plate, clutch release bearing, windshield wipers, brake pads in front, shoe and lining brakes on the rear.

Our best advice to potential buyers of these budget cars is to check with the dealers on:

- How much the said parts would cost **within** the warranty period (usually that's the first three years or 100,000 km—whichever comes first).
- How much the labor and parts would cost for servicing your car **beyond** the warranty period.

Initial impressions

There are certainly some things to expect when you buy cars cheaper than half a million. So we wouldn't be surprised if the dashboards of all three were made of plastic and roof linings were made of carton-molded ceilings. Hyundai Asia Resources Inc. revealed that the dashboard is made mostly of plastic with PVC foam and rubber while the headlining is composed of HS-felt (fiber), PE Powder (plastic) and fabric.

Kia Motors Corp.'s overseas service team in Malaysia revealed that the dashboard is made of polypropylene (PP) and the roof lining is made of nonwoven fabric.

Kia stressed that PP is being used for the dashboards of entry level vehicles contrary to the more expensive cushioned dashboard usually being used for pricier cars which are made of polyuretane (PU).

According to GM, the Spark's dashboards and roof linings are made of "special" materials.

Some portion of the Getz's interior side panels were upholstered which is more expensive than that of the Picanto and the Spark.

Upholstery fabrics for all three look the same, but the fabric of Getz looks better. The upholstery durability, however, becomes a toss-up among the three.

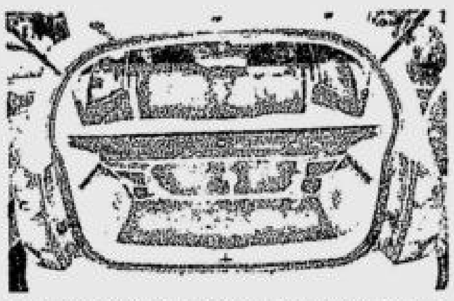
For carpet-flooring quality, Getz gets the "red carpet" treatment because of its thicker density. Hari claims that Getz's floor carpet is 45 percent fiber, 35 percent polyester, 15 percent polyethylene (plastic) and 5 percent latex (used in rubber).

Picanto's floor covering is nonwoven fabric that underwent a needle punch process.

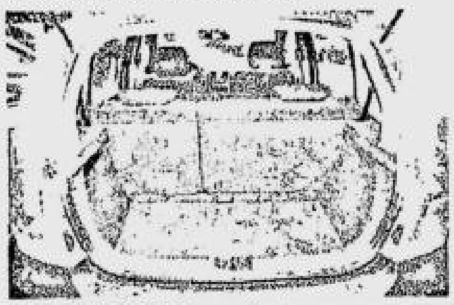
Picanto gets points for seat softness. But for lumbar support, Getz is it.

'Butt' test

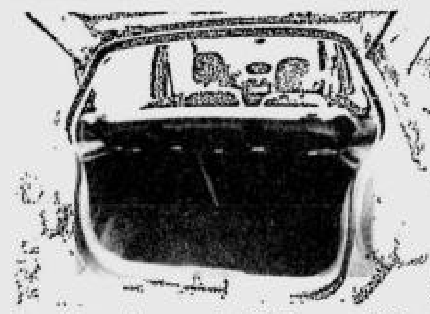
The Getz is the more "family-oriented" car among the three. It has the biggest in space seating (five 150-lb plus adults can sit in relative comfort). We could pack in three burly adults at the back seats of the Picanto and Spark, but we could hardly close the doors on the Picanto, and the passengers' breathing got noticeably more constricted when we closed the doors on them in the Spark.



PICANTO'S trunk space is 250 liters or 988 liters with folded seats



EXACTLY 987 liters of extra space are added when seats are folded.



Spark trunk space is 170 liters or 845 liters with folded seats

For the do-it-yourselfers, engine maintenance and examination comes easier with Getz for its roomy engine bay. The engine space is obviously meant also for the bigger Getz engines—the 1.4-liter gasoline and the 1.5-liter common rail direct injection (CRDi) diesel.

You will have to use a child's hands and arms to tinker with the engines of Picanto and Spark, though. Picanto engineers countered that since the vehicle is fitted with a small engine, and most of its electrical and electronic components (sensors and actuators) are easily accessible as they are located within the front and topside of the engine, then hobbyists and "tinkerers" should have ample space to work on.

All three are potentially more brake efficient because of their hydro-vacuum systems. This system assists the foot so the driver won't be pushing too hard on the brakes to get ample braking power. Getz, however, has bigger discs in front. The bigger brake discs coupled with the hydrovac result in even more stopping power. Again, the reason for this must be to allow for the other bigger engines of the Getz.

Picanto should reveal its advantage in flooded streets. Air intake of the air cleaner is higher compared to the Getz and Spark. For cars of lower clearances, the potential for scooping in flooded water is possible.

The Getz's radiator is noticeably bigger, leading us to believe that this car is less prone to overheating. GM engineers countered that every vehicle would be prone to overheating if not properly maintained, adding that with the size of the Spark engine, a large radiator would not be needed.

Only the Spark puts in a three-point seatbelt for the rear middle passenger, which is rare even in more expensive cars. Getz and Picanto just put lap belts there, which are not ideal for a child to be strapped in. Crash analyses show that lap belts could result in broken pelvises for more fragile passengers such as children.

Also, only the Spark has the third rear brake light and a rear wiper. On the downside, the Spark is the only one not equipped with power locks. Its power windows are available only for the front passengers, as well. The rear windows are manually operated. It puzzles us no end why the makers of the Spark wouldn't go all power in this department, considering that the Spark is the priciest of the three.

Fuel capacity/drive

The Getz is the heaviest among the three, owing again to the larger provisions of the engine bay to accommodate its larger engine versions. Its curb weight is 994 kg, the gross vehicle weight is 1,420 kg; Picanto's curb weight is 928 kg and its gross vehicle weight is 1,350 kg. The Spark's curb weight is 795 kg and its gross vehicle weight is 1,270 kg.

These three minis were subjected to an 80-km rough fuel mileage test on a rainy Tuesday afternoon with varying traffic conditions. On a route that started from UP Diliman to Sta. Rosa, Laguna via C5 and South Expressway, we test-drove the cars, making sure that we utilized all forward gears and our rpm did not exceed 2,000.

During the first 40-km run, the Spark showed itself as the most fuel-efficient followed by the Picanto and Getz. For the second run which took us from Sta. Rosa to Makati (another 40 km), the Picanto this time emerged the most fuel miser followed by Getz and Spark. When the average of the two runs was computed, the Spark emerged as the most economical, but that was expected, considering its lower weight and size.

Suffice to say, the three cars needed only about half of fuel the bigger sedans would normally consume for the same distance—a significant savings in fuel any way you look at it.

Clutch play

The Picanto's clutch pedal is harder to depress compared to the Getz and Spark. The Spark clutch pedal, on the other hand, is so soft you might even feel it isn't there. It was revealed that the Picanto's and Spark's clutches are driven by cable.

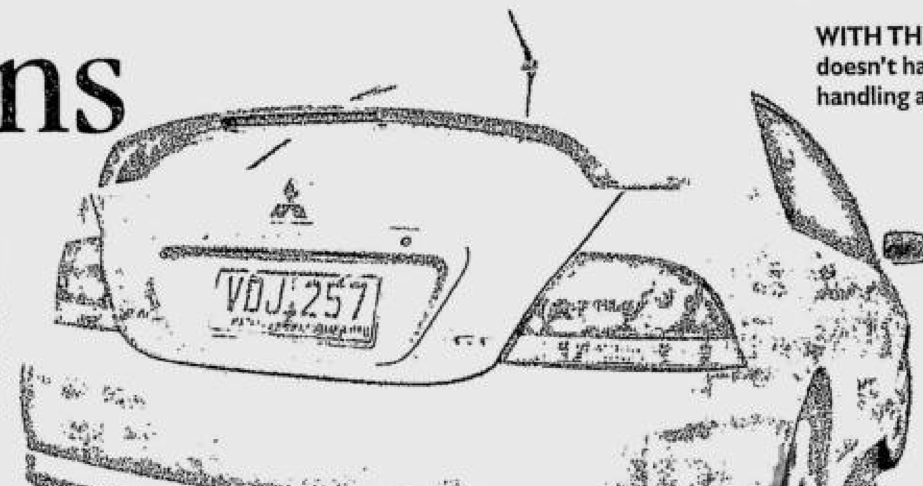
Cable clutches might be less expensive to install than hydraulic ones, but then cables have a tendency to snap.

Kia engineers countered clutch cable durability depends on the quality of the material used. They added that majority of concern regarding clutch cable is not about snapping but the cable rubbing the inner lining of the cable shield *(nagiging maganit)* making it hard to press the clutch pedal. Kia added that hydraulic clutch system is better in terms of ease in pressing the clutch pedal. So why did Getz use the hydraulic system and the other two the cable system?

The Getz clutch is hydraulic and deep. The Spark's almost-not-there clutch meant that its cable is set straight, as opposed to the Picanto's clutch cable which is set in a curve. The problem arising from this "crooked" cable is not just the difficulty in stepping on the clutch, but more important, in the resulting inconsistency of the clutch and gas pedal mix. Those who drove the Picanto experienced first gear stalling on more than one occasion because of this setup.

Getz offers the most visible dashboard instrumentation. The Spark's instrumentation panel is set at the middle of the dashboard, not directly behind the steering wheel. This setup might take some getting used to for some drivers.

A tale of 2 sedans



WITH THE 2007 MITSUBISHI Lancer 2.0 GT, one doesn't have to spend a lot to enjoy impressive handling and road-holding properties.

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

THE PRICES OF THESE TWO SEDANS lie at opposite ends of the spectrum, hinting as to which group of car buyers they are targeted at.

At one end of the spectrum lies a sedan that tells its market that they don't have to spend a lot to enjoy impressive handling and road-holding properties normally expected from more expensive sports cars while on the other end offers those who are ready to spend more, the chance to experience exceptional luxury along with the car brand's long tradition of class-leading refinement, enviable build quality and engineering innovation.

In a way, both the 2007 Mitsubishi Lancer 2.0 GT and the 2006 BMW 325i are just after one thing: the pursuit of the ultimate in driving pleasure, and as this writer has found out, both cars have succeeded in delivering their promise.

Impressive

On the outside, the 2007 Lancer 2.0 GT is impressive. With its front and rear bumpers extended, headlamps now sporting smoked-type housing, front, side, rear airdams and rear spoiler, 16-inch (5-spoke) aluminum wheels, this P958,000 car is packaged to be more than just an eye candy.

Bolstering its bold and sporty stance, Mitsubishi gave the 2007 Lancer 2.0 GT a 2-liter, 133 horsepower, 4G63 engine (which is the same base engine of the Japanese carmaker's iconic supercar, the Lancer Evolution) as well as a 4-speed automatic Invecs II (with sport mode) transmission.

Sport-type bucket seats at the front, Momo three-spoke leather-wrapped steering wheel, leather-wrapped shift knob and parking brake lever, three-link (white face with red-orange dials and chrome ring accents) meter instrument panel and carbon fiber-look dashboard panel complete the package.

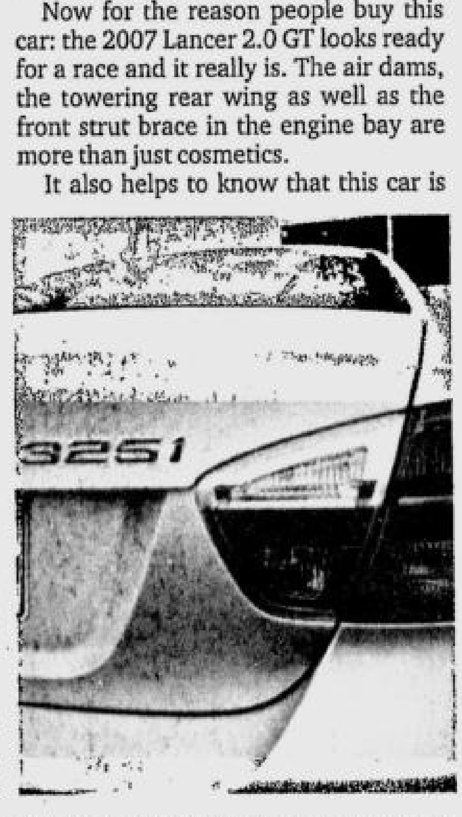
More than just cosmetics

Now for the reason people buy this car: the 2007 Lancer 2.0 GT looks ready for a race and it really is. The air dams, the towering rear wing as well as the front strut brace in the engine bay are more than just cosmetics.

It also helps to know that this car is also equipped with large 4-wheel disc brakes, ABS with electronic brakeforce distribution and dual SRS airbags.

"They're all functional and work in unison to enable this car do some vicious acceleration whenever there's a free stretch or when overtaking and make it wonderfully stable when cornering or weaving through traffic," explained Arlan Reyes of Mitsubishi Motors Philippines.

So when it's time to hit the accelerator, the 2007 Lancer 2.0 GT's high-speed stability is confidence inspiring. Bottom line, it's an effortless car to use daily: comfortable and manageable when you just want to cruise; engaging and thrilling when you want to play with it.



THE PULL of the BMW badge is enough for some people to stretch their budget.

THE BMW interior screams refinement and good taste.

Don't be fooled

And while the 2007 Lancer 2.0 GT's ready-to-rumble look can be a giveaway, don't be fooled by this other car's refined and well-mannered façade.

The 2006 BMW 325i packs a mean punch. Powered by a 2.5-liter, 218 horsepower engine, this P3.380 million luxury sports sedan could hurl its 1,965-kilogram frame from standstill to 100 kph in just 7.7 seconds.

But of course, this is not the primary reason one buys this type of car—you buy BMW because of the exceptional quality and the status it imparts to its owner.

From the solid "thunk" upon closing its doors, the textured leather on the steering wheel, seats and door panels, to the sight of the precise interior design and construction, the car screams refinement and good taste.

Silken fluidity

Silken fluidity perfectly describes the character of the 2006 BMW 325i engine, steering and brakes. Hit the accelerator and you could feel the car's wonderful engine note growls as well as its Steptronic six-speed automatic transmission working seamlessly as they push you back into a wonderfully designed seat.

Indeed, the 2006 BMW 325i is well-rounded, successfully harmonizing every component of driving—from acceleration and shifting to cornering and braking—like a string quartet.

For 2006, the BMW 325i also comes with an interesting device previously offered only in BMW's more expensive models: the Comfort Access.

ID sensor

This straight-edged "ID sensor" takes the place of a conventional ignition key, allowing you to access the car more easily. Once it's close enough (about half a meter) it sends signals to the car to either disengage or activate the security system and as well as unlock or lock the doors (including the trunk).

As long as this device is in your pocket, you can simply walk up to the car and touch one of the outer door handles. Once seated, you just press the start/stop button, and off you go.

Now, that's the Zen-like engineering and class-leading technologies that BMW faithfuls are always raving about.

Ethanol and mileage

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

IF THOSE SKEPTICAL ABOUT the alternative fuels program were made to limit their arguments to only one, it would probably be this: that motorists get less mileage when they use ethanol because its energy content is lower than gasoline's. In fact, this was the first of four "Technical Facts" presented by the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) at their press conference last week when they voiced their concerns about legislation mandating the use of biofuels.

"Ethanol contains only about two-thirds (2/3) the energy of an equivalent volume of conventional gasoline," the Campi press release claims. "Because of its lower energy content, ethanol also reduces mileage per gallon." Elaborating further, Campi president Elizabeth Lee said, "If one liter of regular 100 percent gasoline takes you 10 kilometers, the same liter of 100 percent ethanol will take you only 6.67 kilometers."

Price gap

So taking into account ethanol's lower energy content and the current pump prices, she said, there should be a substantial price difference between bioethanol and regular gasoline to make it worthwhile for motorists. The price gap should at least compensate for the mileage loss.

The lower energy content of ethanol has already been pointed out by Car and Driver columnist Patrick Bedard. In a July 2006 issue of Newsweek magazine, Bedard wrote that ethanol "contains about 30 percent of the energy in an equal volume of gasoline. So it really displaces only about 3.5 percent of gasoline by energy content, which is the only measure the engine cares about."

In his column in the May 2006 issue of Car and Driver, Bedard wrote that while ethanol packs more energy into a gallon of gasoline than alternatives such as natural gas, LPG and hydrogen, it is not as good as gasoline for, according to the US Department of Energy, you need about 1.5 gallons of ethanol to drive the same distance as on one gallon of gasoline. Since this means poorer mileage, you will need a bigger tank for the same range, Bedard noted.

Disadvantages

What does the lower energy content of ethanol mean to the consumer? When you combine this disadvantage with the others cited by Campi—1) that ethanol, with its higher oxygen content, alters the air-to-fuel ratio and thus causes incomplete combustion which increases emissions; 2) while carbon monoxide level is minimally reduced, the nitrogen oxide and hydrocarbon levels are significantly increased; 3) since ethanol easily picks up water from the atmosphere, it increases petroleum's ability to hold water which will eventually corrode metal components in the fuel system; 4) the use of ethanol can result in poor cold start performance due to a higher heat of vaporization than other octane enhancers—you begin to wonder whether you will really save money and lessen air pollution by using ethanol-blended gasoline.

Chances are, if all these disadvantages enumerated by Campi are true (they cite the Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association or Jama, the World Wide Fuel Charter or WWFC and the Australian Department of Environment and Heritage as sources), you might even end up damaging your car's engine.

Missed point

Unfortunately, the Philippine Fuel Ethanol Alliance (PFEA) missed the point entirely when it lambasted Campi for its "erroneous and misleading statements" on ethanol. The PFEA could have disputed Campi's statement on the lower energy content of ethanol by citing its past use for racing due to its higher octane value when mixed with gasoline. Instead, the PFEA focused on Campi's saying that the government will have to subsidize ethanol production and that E10 would be more expensive than conventional gasoline.

Without rebutting Campi's arguments against the mandated use of bioethanol point by point, the PFEA issued a motherhood statement reciting the conclusions of their 2005 policy study on the benefits of ethanol production in terms of energy security, environmental quality, rural employment and economic progress.

Long term

It will take more than motherhood statements for alternative fuel proponents to convince the motoring public to willingly switch to biofuels. Car owners worry about the long-term effects of biofuels on their engines, remembering how the government abandoned the Alcogas program in the 1980s after alcogas increased the corrosion rate of fuel tanks and clogged fuel lines, carburetors and fuel filters, resulting in stalling and hard-starting engines.

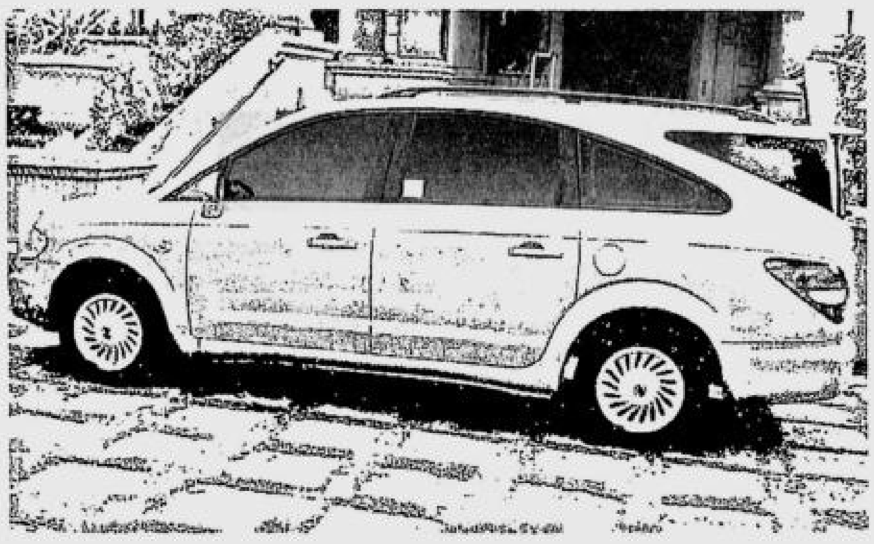
The production process and quality of biotethanol may have improved since then, but the Department of Energy with the cooperation of Campi and the oil companies should conduct actual durability tests up to 100,000 kilometers in the Philippine context plus a comprehensive technical evaluation of alternative fuels to reassure consumers. The International Finance Corporation's plan to fund a deeper study on the potentials of renewable energy and biofuels in the Philippines, together with the running tests, should give everyone a better perspective.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Environmental protection is a family value.

* * *

E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph.



THE COMPLETE SsangYong Stavic is distinguished by its boxlike rear overhang with rear quarter and tailgate windows and a rear spoiler. In last week's photo, this important portion did not appear. (AIDA SEVILLA MENDOZA)

Moments of fluid force

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

IT IS EASY TO GET CAUGHT UP IN CATchy product taglines. Just do it. Just for the taste of it. The power of dreams. Replacing luck. These are words that become etched in the consumer public's mind, very often through advertising campaigns of unbelievable thoroughness and great cost.

The struggle for the hearts, minds and paychecks of customers does not end here. The attention-grabbing publicity must be backed with a solid product that delivers satisfaction and performs as advertised. This is where something's deserved success actually lays.

Petroleum lubricants are not saved from having to perform and deliver on what they claim. There is oil in our engines because of the essential need for protection from the forces of friction and heat. Most any engine oil from a major brand out in the market will deliver on the ability to lubricate an engine.

Assessing a product

We, the public, can rest easy that given the right type, weight and viscosity the oil you put in your engine will do its job. The trouble is each lubricant company will be pitching a new kind of technology or superior edge over the competition. Back to our initial problem then that our choice of engine oil might just be a function of said company's advertising budget. Yet, the only real way of assessing a product is through use.

There are currently five liters of 5w40 Motul 300V Power engine oil running my daily drive's K20 powerplant. Some will cite that this is a little overkill for a daily driven engine, even one that autocrosses once in a while. The opportunity to test this high a grade of oil was not something I was going to pass up and it is not as if the Motul brand name was something to be worried about.

Like other lubricant manufacturers, their top of mind recall comes from their involvement in motor sport. This is a necessary, expensive advertising evil but one that ensures that the public is familiar with a product that can perform at the highest levels of abuse and maintain a certain level of performance. Motul livery can be found with teams campaigning in Moto GP, the World Rally Championship and the Japan GT Championship.

As exciting as the idea is of using a product from the upper echelons of racing, the No. 1 reason drawing me to this oil is the company's history of innovation. We might take these technologies for granted in this day and age but something must be said about a company so obsessed with breakthroughs and industry firsts.

3 world's firsts

What are these products that practically set the shape of the history of motor lubricants? The answer is simple: Motul is responsible for the development of three world's firsts—Multigrade motor oil in 1953, Semisynthetic motor oil in 1966 and Synthetic motor oil in 1971. For those reasons alone, the 300V was more than welcome in my engine.

A thousand kilometers of daily driving and autocrossing has given me a pretty good picture of changes noticeable from the driver's seat. It must be said that engine idle is a little rougher, probably owing to the light, thin nature of the oil film—apparently not a problem because of their balanced use of complex esters and high polymer esters. Once on the gas and staying in the low rpm range, there is very little discernable from the 300V and other premium engine oils that I have used.

The magic begins though from about 3,000 rpm to all the way to redline as the engine revolutions come quicker and the power delivery smoother—excellent when you are driving into a sharp corner and have to blip the gas to keep the engine in its power band for the eventual dash at exit.

So does Motul really deserve the Fluid Force tagline? Yes, if only to stress the fact that this is a lubricant company that is at the leading edge of technologies help shape the way we experience engine oils. It must also help that the lubricants themselves are top shelf, giving us the ability and drive to push the envelope too.

Helpful hints on lighting

BOSCH, MANUFACTURER OF DIFferent types of headlamps, provides the following lighting tips:

- Regularly check your car's lighting system; if a lamp bulb is dim, replacement is necessary.
- Replace your headlamp bulb every 50,000 km or every 2 years. The light output of lamp bulbs diminishes over the course of 24 months.
- Every time you replace your headlamp bulbs, it is recommended that you replace both left and right.
- Regularly clean your headlamp glass to avoid dazzling oncoming traffic, and thus increase your own safety.
- Regularly check and adjust your lighting system. Light efficiency of headlamps systems can diminish by up to 50 percent in 5 years due to dirt on the road and environmental influences.

Bosch manufactures different types of headlamps: the conventional reflection-type headlamps wherein the light distribution on the road is controlled by the ribs and prisms of the lens. The newer headlamp design has clear lens and HNS (Homogeneous Numerical calculated Surface) wherein the light distribution on the road is controlled by the tens of thousands of minute segments in the reflector.

Bosch has been providing automotive manufacturers such as Mercedes Benz, Volvo, BMW, Audi, Ford, Honda, Toyota, Mazda etc. with original equipment (OE) headlamps. It is represented in the country by Robert Bosch Inc. (Philippines).

MOTORSCOPE

Ford Focus unleashes the Flex-Fuel Vehicle Road Challenge

TRUST FORD GROUP PHILIPPINES TO hold a public test drive with a difference. Some of today's hottest celebrities, members of the motoring media, car aficionados and onlookers were recently treated to a glimpse of its newest offering—the Ford Focus Flex-Fuel Vehicle (FFV)—on a setup which provided potential customers with WRC-type thrills at the SM Mall of Asia.

Following the successful launch of the Ford Focus 1.8L and 2.0L FFVs, Ford and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. allowed everyone to be up close and experience the eco-friendly vehicles, demonstrating Ford's leadership in automotive innovation and environmental advocacy. Still endowed with the Focus DNA—European styling, German engineering and superior driving dynamics—the award-winning vehicles are now built to run on a fuel mixture of gasoline and ethanol.

Visitors boarded the Ford Focus 1.8L and 2.0L FFVs, powered by Shell Super Unleaded E10, a 10 percent ethanol mixed with 90 percent unleaded gasoline. With these vehicles and the Focus 1.6L Trend, they took to the paved road at the Mall of Asia's open grounds, and went behind the wheel for a slalom course designed to highlight the Focus' handling and acceleration.

As an added treat, media attendees gamely raced against celebrity guests.

After maneuvering around a demanding course, the top three racers who clocked in the best time were C! Magazine's Chuck Montecillo (39.13 seconds), Manila Bulletin's Anjo Perez (39.51 seconds), and Philippine Star's Jeff Reyes (39.62 seconds). TV personality Phoemela Barranda bagged the "Fastest Female Driver" title, while Paolo Paraiso, Mark Nelson and lawyer Mike Toledo posted the best time among the celebrity guests.

Other celebrities present were couple Vince Hizon and Shaan Bermudez-Hizon, sisters Issa and Cheska Litton, Claudine Trillo, Maike Evers, Priscilla Meirelles, Janna Victoria and Dianne Sison.

Racing party showcases McLaren Mercedes MP4-20

WHAT DO YOU GET WHEN YOU COMbine the fast-paced action of Formula One with the cool and mesmerizing beat of house music and the refined and unparalleled taste of the world's No. 1 Scotch whiskey? It's definitely an evening of high adrenaline and pure energy.

The fast and furious Johnnie Walker Racing Party recently zoomed its way to the hearts of Manila's upscale crowd by bringing in the best in local and international DJ house music, hot arcade action, and showcasing one of Formula One's premier racing cars—the McLaren Mercedes MP4-20—all under the PICC Forum tent, CCP Complex on Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City.

Diageo's Jasper Evangelista, Johnnie Walker marketing manager said, "Johnnie Walker is the world's best-selling Scotch whisky and this innovative partnership with Team McLaren Mercedes, one of the top Formula 1 teams, brings together two iconic brands recognized globally for their contemporary and international style. With a viewing audience of more than two billion annually, F1 provides a unique global platform to take the lead and promote responsible drinking and it will be at the heart of our fully integrated sponsorship activities."

The racing party delivered the ultimate Friday night out as guests grooved to the music of Drip. One of UK's hottest female DJs, Miss Behavin', and the Philippines' very own, DJ Manolet Dario, gave everyone a party that's classy, fun-filled and world-class.

Guests were game enough to participate in the various side activities and interactive games. Johnnie Walker drinks were served during the open bar with aficionados partying 'til the wee hours of the morning.

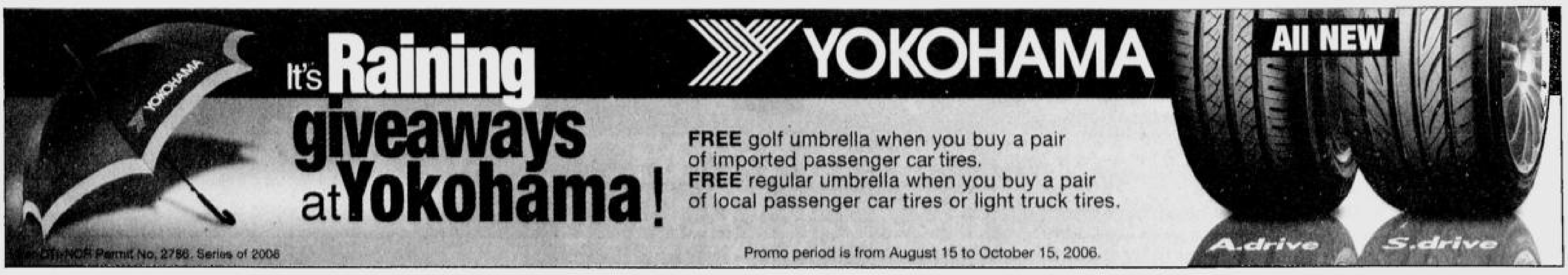
AAP Road Safety Call Center to be launched tomorrow

THE AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION Philippines (AAP, formerly Philippine Motor Association) will formally launch the AAP Road Safety Call Center tomorrow during the 6th Road Safety Conference, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Visayas Ballroom of the Philippine Plaza Hotel, CCP Complex, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City, with Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza as keynote speaker.

At the same time, the "Think before You Drive" slogan campaign, a global safety initiative of the FIA (Federation Internationale de l'Automobile) Foundation and motoring clubs worldwide, will be launched.

The theme of the 6th Road Safety Conference, the last of a series organized by AAP and the University of the Philippines National Center for Transportation Studies (UP-NCTS) with Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. (TMPC), is "Projects in Review" with Public Works and Highways Undersecretary Manuel Bonoan, Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRP) Chair Elena Bautista, Land Transportation Office (LTO) chief Annell Lontoc, Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) director Angelito Vergel de Dios, Marte Perez of Safe Kids Philippines and Dr. Ric Sigua of UP-NCTS) presenting their respective road safety projects.

The AAP Road Safety Call Center, located at AAP's Emergency Roadside Service building at 682 Aurora Blvd., Quezon City, operates 24/7 to receive calls and reports on road safety concerns from the public for immediate forwarding to the pertinent government agencies for action. The call center is a joint project of the AAP, TMPC and UP-NCTS with the cooperation of the DPWH, DOTC and MMDA.



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BUSINESS

Japan trade sentiment on RP continues to go up

Rising demand for semiconductors helped in pushing up indices

By Ronnel W. Domingo

JAPANESE FIRMS' BUSINESS sentiment on the country continued to improve, with a gain of 5.7 points in August, but remained on the negative side for the 16th consecutive month.

According to the Japan External Trade Organization's monthly diffusion index survey, this was the third straight month that Japanese firms had improved the country's ratings since the companies gave it a negative 15.5 score in May.

Jetro data showed that Japanese firms operating in the Philippines gave the local business environment a rating of negative 4.4, and that the outlook for the next month showed a further improvement to negative 3.5 points.

The agency added that rising global demand for semiconductors were strengthening business confidence among Japanese electric and electronics manufacturers, which in turn helped push indices higher.

The ratings measure year-on-year changes in business outlooks for the current month and the next two or three months.

Ratings are expressed as diffusion indices, which show the difference between positive and negative responses.

Confidence for the Philippines was last seen on the positive side in April 2005, when respondents gave the country a rating of 1.6 points.

Since Jetro started the poll in June 2001, Philippine ratings had bottomed at negative 40.9 in December of that year and peaked at 22.9 in September 2004.

According to Jetro's latest poll, the country's indices have improved amid a "still subdued" sentiment on the five original members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.

Overall sentiment for the five countries improved by 3.4 points over the previous month, but remained negative for the ninth consecutive month at -5.6.

Ratings for the region were all in the negative except for Singapore, which rated 15.7 points. Also, the four Asean countries showed improvement compared to July ratings except for Singapore, which rated 20.2 last month.

In August, Indonesia got the worst rating at negative 46, while Malaysia got negative 2.8. Thailand had negative 8.1.

Jetro explained that the aim of the survey was to provide up-to-date information on business conditions in the Asian economy to help companies develop more effective business strategies.

Firms were asked to compare earnings prospects, supply and demand, inventory, sales prices and accounts receivable with the same period of the previous year.

Philippine-based respondents in the August survey included 204 firms engaged in oil, chemicals, steel, metals, electronic machinery and other manufacturing concerns as well as construction, real estate, transport, communication, commerce and other non-manufacturing activities.

Shipowners balk at double cost for double hull tankers

By Riza T. Olchondra

SHIPOWNERS ARE ASKING FOR more time to replace their single-hull tankers with double-hull vessels because the capital and maintenance costs for the hardier vessels are higher, an official of the Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) said.

Single hull tankers, which are being phased out around the world, have become the subject of revived scrutiny in the country following the Aug. 11 sinking of the weather-beaten MT Solar I off Guimaras. The sunken vessel unleashed a massive oil spill.

Lawyer Antero Peñasares, Marina's head executive assistant, said that stakeholders in the shipping industry want the ban on single hull vessels implemented in 2015. But the agency said that the ban could be implemented as early as 2008.

Shipowners the world over, Philippine-registered ones included, have been urged to replace their single hull oil cargo vessels with the double-hull models, which have an extra inner plate that keeps the oil cargo inside the hold of the ship from leaking out to sea when the vessel is damaged.

The increased security is virtually priceless, Peñasares said in an interview, but the double hulls are about twice as expensive as single hulls, and their maintenance and operation costs run 5 to 13 percent higher.

An official with the Filipino Shipowners' Association (FSA) said that all 24 member-companies operate single-hull vessels.

The FSA official declined to say how many vessels the companies are running, but Peñasares said that there are 124 vessels on record with the agency.

First, however, there must be consultations.

"We have to balance both ends (security and costs)," Peñasares said.

FARMERS in Isabela turn to bananas after experiencing losses in rice and corn crops. VILLAMOR VISAYA JR. / INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Banana exports up 15% in first half

By Christine A. Gaylican

EXPORTS OF FRESH BANANAS in the first semester has reportedly gone up by almost 15 percent—a trend industry officials expect to be sustained throughout the rest of the year.

Shipment of fresh bananas, particularly of the Philippine Cavendish variety, to different countries increased by 14.5 percent to 1.04 million metric tons from January to June, according to data obtained from the Pilipino Banana Growers and Exporters Association (PBGEA).

The growth could be attributed to higher demand in the Middle East, South Korea, China, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Russia and Singapore.

Shipments to the Middle East rose 49 percent to 296,119 metric tons (MT) from 198,992 MT. Exports to China and South Korea also increased by 28 percent and 17 percent, respectively.

Demand from Japan slightly dropped by 4 percent to 439,915 MT compared with the 458,387 MT that was shipped out in the same period last year.

The Philippines is the world's second largest producer of bananas, with Mindanao-based farms producing an average of 10,000 tons of Cavendish bananas per hectare per year, said Senen Bacani, chair and CEO of La Fruitera Inc., the sixth largest exporter.

Bacani told the INQUIRER that the significant gains in the first semester will be felt through the remaining months of the year, as the demand for fresh fruits in the international market continues to grow.

"The trend will continue, but the expansion in the local farms may also have a significant impact on prices," he said.

Fresh cavendish bananas now fetch around $2 to $3 per 13-kilo box in the international market.

Major exporting companies based in Mindanao include Lapanday Foods Corp., Dole-Stanfilco Philippines and Anflo Management and Investment Corp.

RP, China, Malaysia firms start survey in Calamian

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL Co. Exploration Corp. (PNOC-EC), China National Offshore Oil Co. and Malaysian firm Mitra Energy Ltd. have started a $2.4-million seismic survey over the area covered by Service Contract 57 in Calamian.

In a statement issued yesterday, PNOC-EC said the project, covering an area measuring about 2,500 kilometers, was meant to gather the necessary geophysical data that would allow the three companies to determine the drilling prospects within the petroleum block.

The survey, which is being conducted by Viking Maritime Inc.'s MV Veritas Voyager, began on Sunday.

It is expected to be completed the survey on Sept. 18.

The area covered by SC 57 lies north of the other oil fields that include Malampaya, Nido, Cadlao and Matinloc.

It is located within the northwest Palawan block, where most of the country's oil production comes.

The entire block spans 720,000 hectares.

PNOC-EC said that the contract has a seven-year term, with the first three years allotted for the acquisition of at least 1,000 kilometers of seismic data, and the drilling of a well.

Total expenditures for the first three years were estimated at $17.6 million, with the cost of the current seismic project pegged at about $2.4 million.

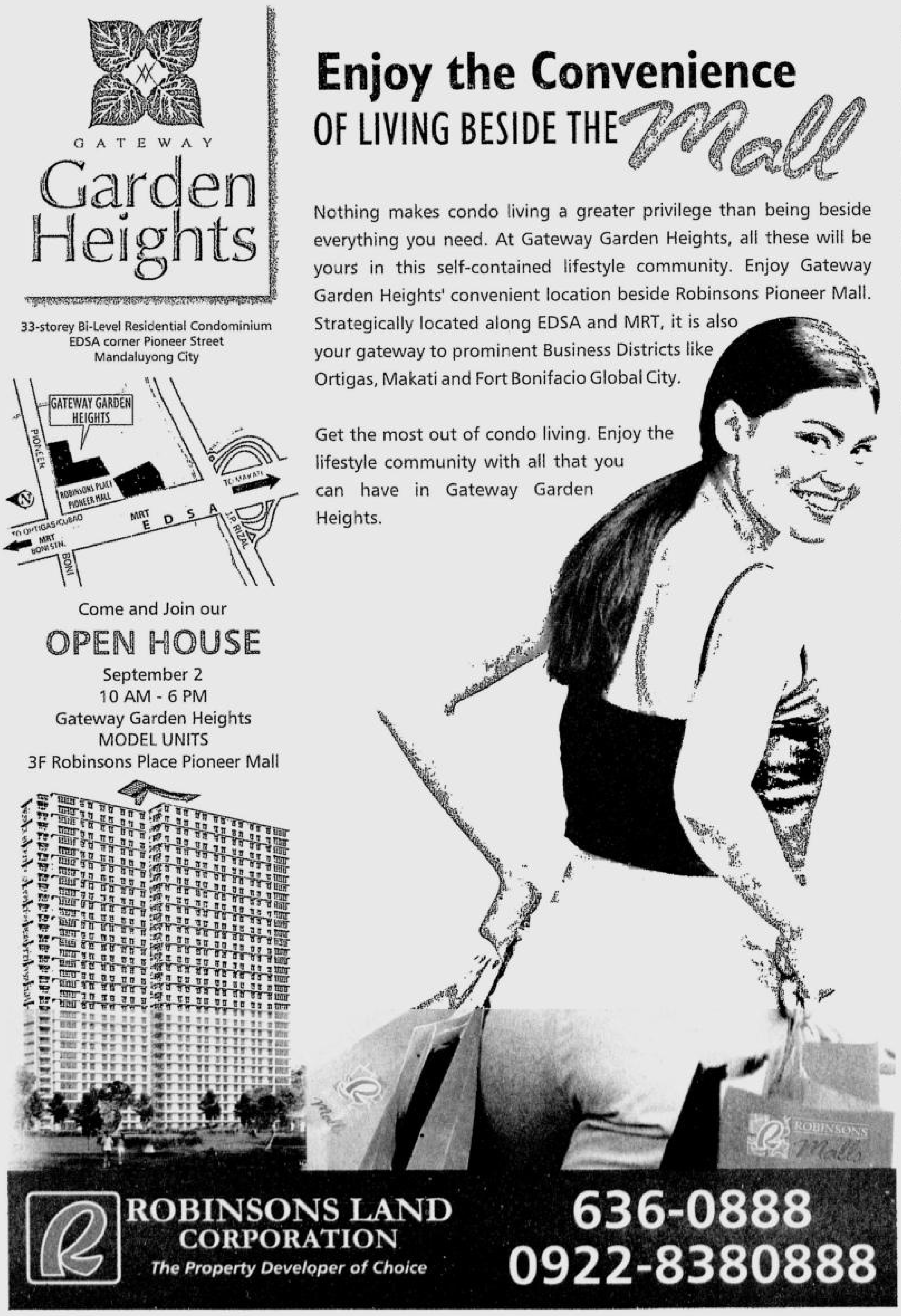
The Department of Energy awarded SC 57 to PNOC-EC on Sept. 15, 2005.

PNOC-EC then signed farm-in agreements with CNOOC and Mitra in January and March, respectively.

CNOOC holds the biggest stake in the project at 51 percent, followed by PNOC-EC at 28 percent and Mitra at 21 percent.

PNOC-EC president Eduardo Mañalac had earlier expressed confidence that the exploration of SC 57 would yield favorable results.

"We're very optimistic of our chances in that area since it is located near the Malampaya gas find," Mañalac said.



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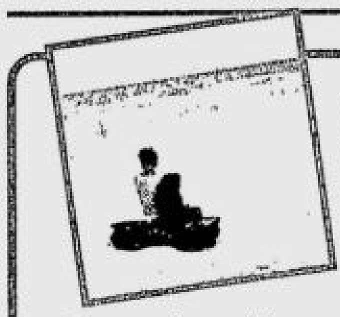
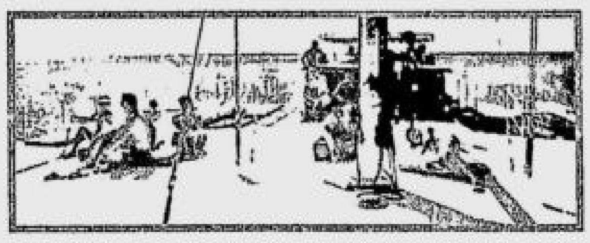
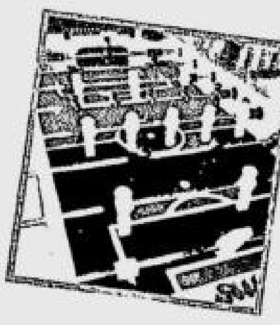
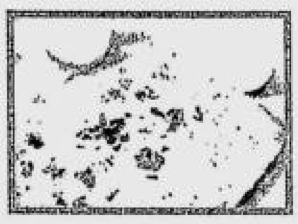






Now that it's 'kapote' season, Boracay is probably the last destination on your mind.

But we're here to tell you that you can still enjoy one of our favorite islands even if the sun refuses to shine.



How to get there, where to stay, what to eat and what to do—we've got them all covered in 2bU!'s rainy Boracay guide.

And because we love the beach, we also have a guide on what we can all do to help save Guimaras from that nasty oil spill.

Sand, surf, storm and saving the environment. It's this week's formula for having fun and changing the world.

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BORACAY
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SAND-CASTLE royalty

Bora in a jiffy

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

Seair's 35-minute flying time to Caticlan is the fastest way to get to Boracay these days

I AM A HUGE FAN of the saying that time is gold. I believe time is extremely precious, so I make sure that time is reserved only for the more important things.

This is why I was delighted to know that for our trip to Boracay, we'd be using the South East Asian Airlines Dornier 328, a state-of-the-art 35-seater twin engine turboprop aircraft which flies Seair's passengers from Manila to Caticlan in only 35 minutes—the fastest flight to Boracay offered by a local airline.

For someone who was spending just a weekend over at the famous destination, the Dornier 328's 35-minute flight was a big help, since it can truly help maximize vacation time, especially during weekends or holidays.

Why spend several hours on the road (or even on another plane) when you can choose to take Seair's 35-minute flight and be in Boracay in no time at all?

It was also good to know that I was being flown by an airline that has been bringing over a million satisfied passengers to beautiful destinations around the world for 11 years now. Apart from flying to local tourist destinations like Caticlan (Boracay) and Cebu in Visayas, Clark and Baler in Luzon, Busuanga, El Nido, Puerto Princesa, Cuyo and Rodriguez in Palawan, Camiguin, Cotabato, Zamboanga, Jolo and Tawi-Tawi in Mindanao, Seair is also positioning itself to enter the international market after its appointment as one of the official carriers for the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia, Philippines East Asian Growth Area region.

Celebrating its 11th corporate anniversary this year, Seair has the distinction of operating the youngest fleet of aircraft in its industry segment. It is also an International Civil Aviation Organization-authorized third-party repair station that offers services including maintenance for airframes, power plants, avionics and aircraft interiors.

Seair, the second oldest airline after Philippine Airlines, is increasing its fleet this year to a total of six high-speed Dornier 328s and nine 19-seater LET410 planes.

The airline has also restored a vintage DO-24ATT seaplane (built in 1938 and refurbished in 2003) that's now being used by pilot Iren Dornier and his team to tour the world and raise funds for Unicef. So far, it has been to Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Africa and has already raised US$61,000, all of it donated to Philippine and German Unicef programs on child education, protection and awareness.

At present, the seaplane is touring Austria and Germany and is headed to the US, South America and South East Asia to complete the second half of its tour.

Seair has an irresistible one-way promo rate of P1,890 [illegible] for Manila-Caticlan tickets and P1,950 [illegible] for Cebu-Caticlan tickets, valid up to Oct 15. Call Seair Reservations at 8490100. As an added convenience for its customers, Seair now offers booking and e-ticketing services at its website www.flyseair.com.

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Boracay, when it

By Ryan R. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

TWO WEEKS AGO I HIED OFF to Bora with two other 2bu! correspondents, Mark Sablan and Arlene Paredes, aboard Seair's Dornier 328, which flies from Manila Domestic Airport to Caticlan (where a ferry whisks tourists off to Bora) in just 35 minutes.

Yes, 35 minutes. That's about as long as one whole end-to-end MRT ride from North Avenue, QC to Pasay. Seair offers up to 10 flights daily to Caticlan this season, from July to September, and had us doing backflips over its rainy-days promos, which includes a pair of free Ray-Ban eyewear, a Smart SIM pack and hotel discounts for everyone with a Manila-Caticlan-Manila ticket (all for P8,995!).

If all of that isn't reason enough to ditch the soggy metro for a few days of Bora bliss, I don't know what is.

We left Manila in a literal storm. Typhoon Floring was just a few days short of her full-frontal assault. Boracay rain, though, is predominantly light at this time of year—some drizzling mostly after dark, so beachcombing under the clear sun is without any hassle (sunscreen still holds, though).

ISLAND love, rain or shine

Upon deplaning in Caticlan, we realized the weather was in a rather jovial mood in this area, compared to Manila's sour showers. The short ferry ride from Caticlan to Boracay was a bit wavier than during summer, and the sea wind stronger, but it was still relatively passive enough to assure a safe passage.

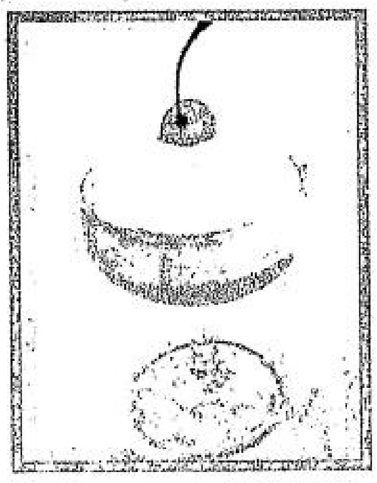
After the wonderful Chinese lunch upon our arrival, served by the Garden Café of Patio Pacific which hosted our four-day stay, I took my first walk along the white beach strip. This drove the first major point of the trip home: lean-season Bora is in a whole other category from the sun-soaked party block the island is known for during the summer months.

The usually per-square-inch-packed strip of fine white sand now commanded brand-new adjectives like quaint and charming. The tourists, mainly Koreans and Europeans plus a sprinkling of über-hot locals, all seemed to be just the type of normal people looking for a serene breather from their busy clockwork routines. Whether they were plopped on the sand with a good book or a music player plugged in place for company, or lapping up the warm Pacific water, everybody was happy under the mild sun and not-so-mild breeze.

At this time of year, the mild sun and the formidable winds make the island's gleaming shores perfect for extreme water sports enthusiasts who want a little more rough-and-tumble to their beach sojourns.

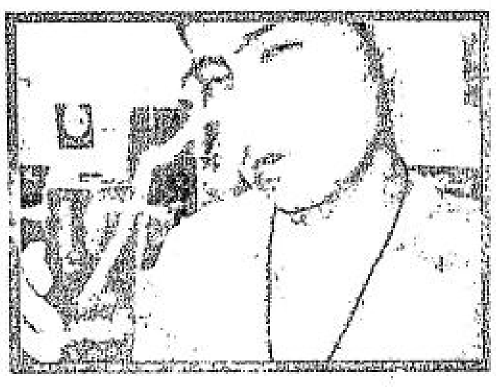
Parasailers, wakeboarders, kiteflyers from all over the world make beelines to Bora during this season. It's great to get wowed by these daredevils, but do try to test your limits and get yourself into their macho gear. It

JACKBERRY is a mixed drink of Jack Daniel's whiskey, strawberry syrup and triple sec.

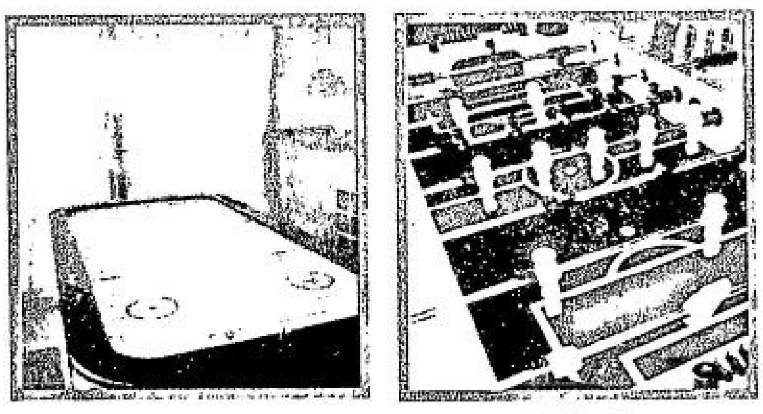


MAKE your own Jack N Bora by mixing Jack Daniel's whiskey, Kahlua, fresh milk and syrup.

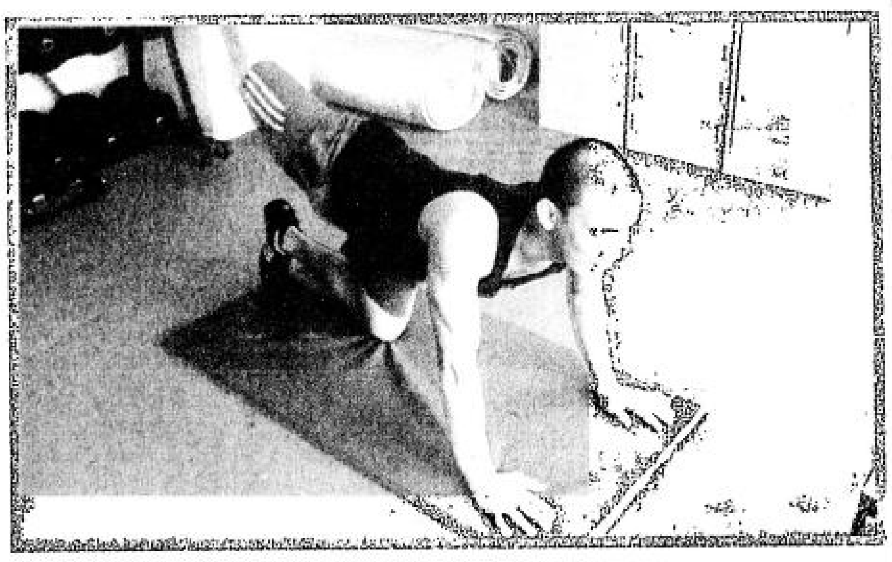
MIX Jack Daniel's whiskey with soda water, syrup and blue curacao to come up with your very own Deep Blue Jack.



I LOVE how the Deep Blue Jack looks—and tastes like!



AIR HOCKEY and foozball for lots of fun time with friends.



A FIT guy demonstrates workout exercises to try before scaling the wall.

pleasures

Text and photos by Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent
Photos taken using Sony Ericsson W810i

I HAVE BEEN TO THE WORLD-renowned Boracay many times, but now that I think about it, I don't really remember the places where I've stayed during my several stays there.

A couple of weeks ago, I flew to the tourist destination once again. This time, I stayed in Patio Pacific (previously known as Pink Patio).

Considering how much I enjoyed the accommodations, I'm sure I'll never forget Patio Pacific and the whole blissful experience I had while rooming there.

One of the best things about Patio Pacific is its location. Ideally located in the middle of the town, it allows for a quick 20-minute boat ride to reach the resort coming from Caticlan. Apart from being about 50 meters from the beach nearest Boat Station 1, Patio Pacific is also not situated on the beachfront, so you don't have to worry about the strong winds and rain during the wet season.

Patio Pacific has 62 air-conditioned rooms with complete amenities.

Each room has a huge, comfy bed, a ref filled with goodies and a TV set, among others. Bathrooms are spacious and the bathtub looks very inviting. Details such as flower petals and scented candles are sprinkled everywhere for that welcoming touch. Select rooms also have Internet access for the techie.

While there are lots of fun stuff to do in Boracay such as water activities and shopping, I found out that I didn't have to leave Patio Pacific to enjoy my Bora vacation.

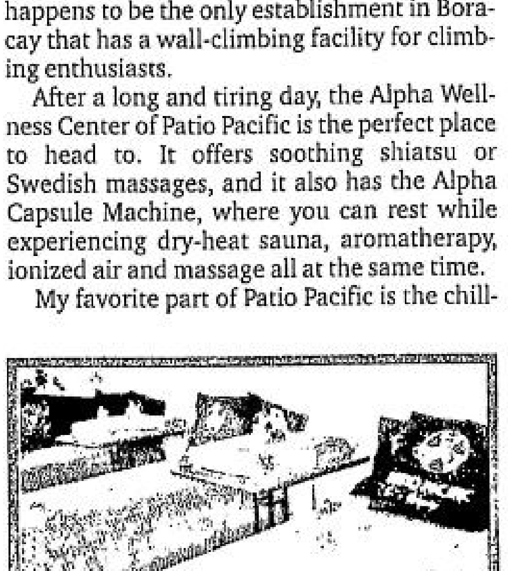
The resort's Nautica Pool allowed me to sunbathe without getting sand inside my shorts and go underwater without my eyes getting stung. What makes the Nautica Pool different is that it plays underwater music—something that would make you want to stay underwater for a bit longer.

For the fitness buff, there is the Alpha Fitness Center which houses gym equipment like treadmills, weight, mats, etc. One of the trainers even taught us some warm-up exercises to prepare us for wall climbing. Patio Pacific happens to be the only establishment in Boracay that has a wall-climbing facility for climbing enthusiasts.

There are so many things you can do in Patio Pacific, especially during the rainy season when one can't bake under the sun or brave the dangerous waves

After a long and tiring day, the Alpha Wellness Center of Patio Pacific is the perfect place to head to. It offers soothing shiatsu or Swedish massages, and it also has the Alpha Capsule Machine, where you can rest while experiencing dry-heat sauna, aromatherapy, ionized air and massage all at the same time.

My favorite part of Patio Pacific is the chill-out place called Vanilla Lounge. It is a great hangout place with its comfy couches and beds (yes, beds), karaoke, foozball and air hockey. It also offers *shisha* or flavored tobacco which you can taste using beautiful water pipes.



VANILLA Lounge has beds for a very relaxing experience while doing videoke, trying *shisha* or sipping your favorite cocktails.

ARLENE gamely tries out the exercise equipment of Patio Pacific's gym.

The Vanilla Lounge also has a bar that serves several cocktails. During our visit, Jack Daniels treated us to delightful drinks such as Jackiri, a mix of Jack Daniels whiskey, lime juice and syrup, and Tennessee 07, which you can make by mixing Jack Daniels whiskey, triple sec lime juice and cola.

Of course, Patio Pacific has a superb restaurant called Garden Café which serves Asian and Chinese cuisine, prepared by a trained chef.

With all of these amenities, I truly found it hard to leave the resort. Why go out when I had everything I wanted within reach? I had a comfy room that had a very inviting bed and bathtub, good food and good drinks plus a lot of activities to fight boredom with. In Patio Pacific, there are so many things you can do, especially during the rainy season when one can't bake under the sun or brave the dangerous waves. Peak season or lean, now I know where to stay during my next trip to Bora,

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drizzles

At this time of year, the mild sun and the formidable winds make the island's gleaming shores perfect for extreme water sports

might just be your thing—you never know.

For the less adventurous, the fun Bora staples like the Banana Boat and the Flying Fish are still available, only a lot rougher given the strong winds.

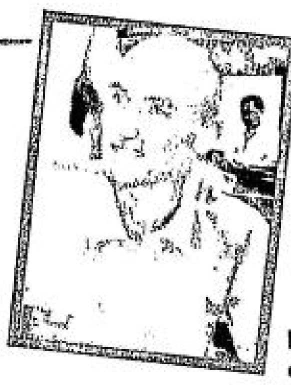
So, as opposed to the wild partying Bora hosts all summer long, what we got ourselves this lean weekend was a fairly quiet affair, and one could actually hear himself talking without screaming his head off. It was Fifa World Cup season when we were in Bora, and almost every beachside bar had its TV tuned in on the games. Every now and then, cheering and taunting floated in the air from the beer-soaked patrons. The cafés and restaurants were also easier to get into this time of year, without the usual line of hungry waiting people.

Lean season also meant wonderful deals for shoppers, with most prices dropping 20- to 30-percent cheaper. You could haggle to your heart's content and, more often than not, get away with it. There's no better time to stack up on your island beads and sarongs for next summer than at this time, when all prices are slashed and negotiable.

Big tip: Be Pinoy. As in *tagalugin ang mga tindera*. They cut locals more slack in terms of prices.

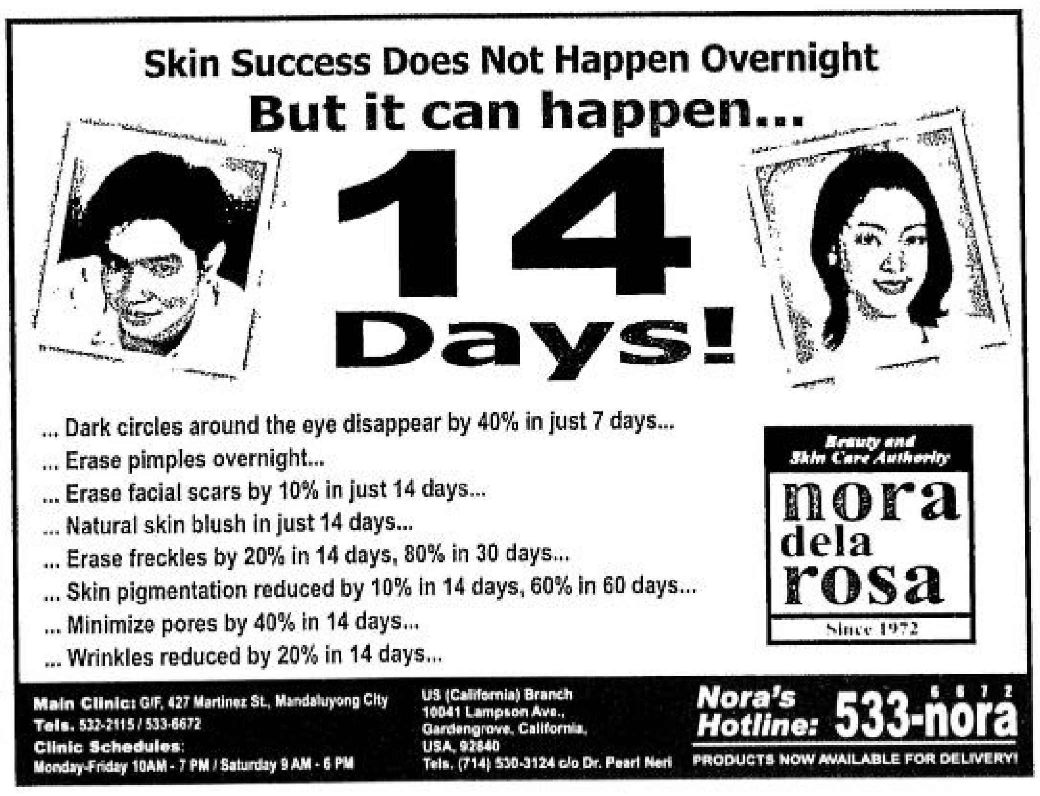
Hotels and resorts offer easier rates outside of the peak season, so looking for a place to stay is a breeze.

Yes, what Bora is sans the usual elements is sheer bliss.



MARCELO Kaicer conquers the seas.

HAVE a great time tasting *shisha* (flavored-tobacco) using Vanilla Lounge's ornate mid-eastern water pipes.



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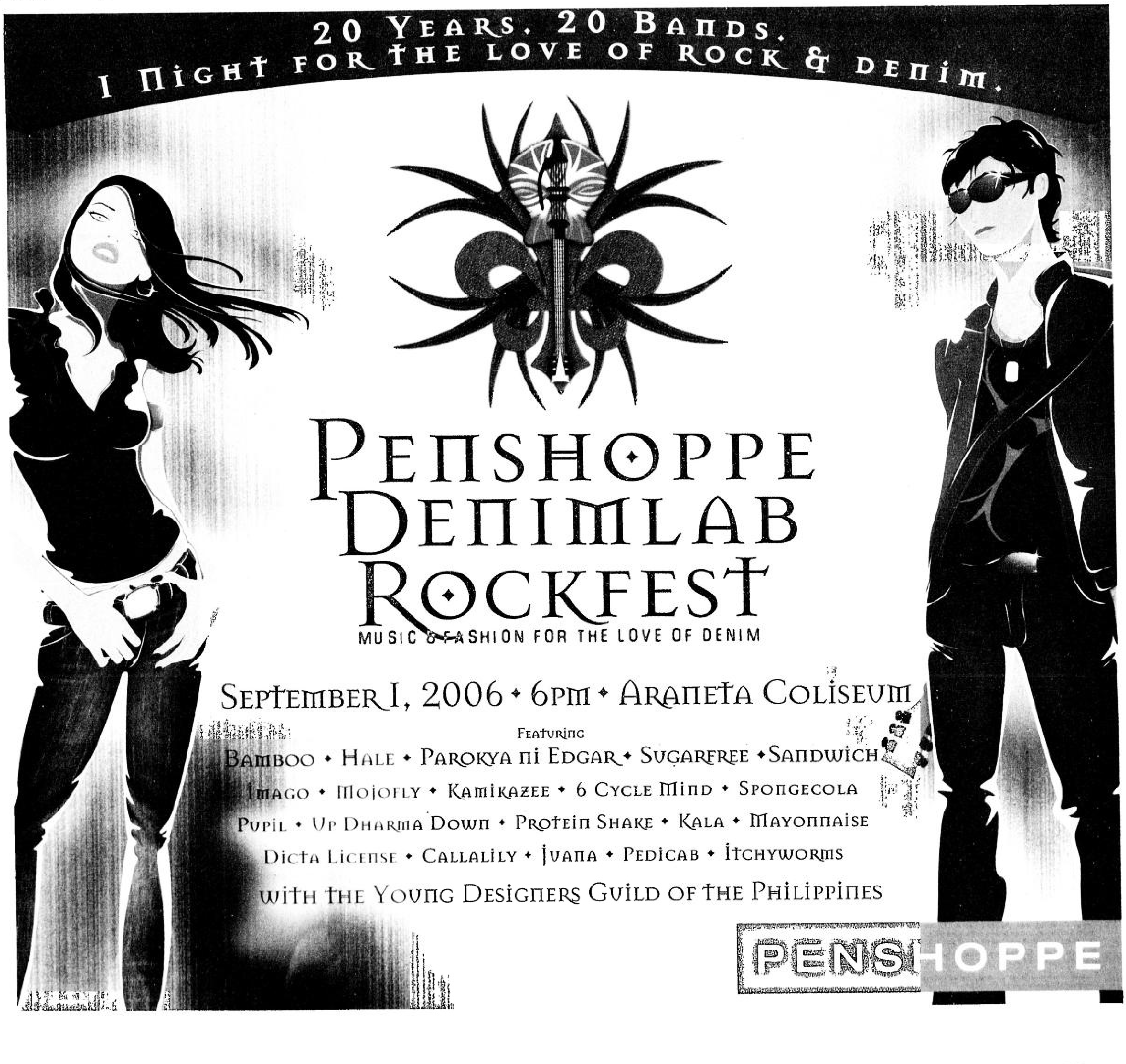

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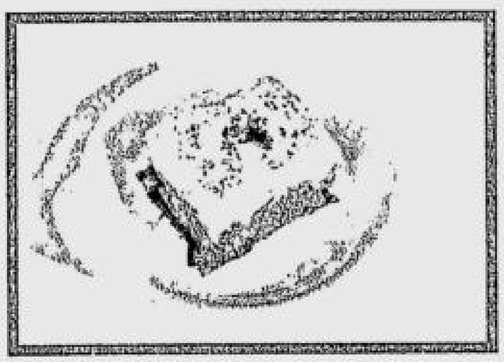
ZUZUNI restaurant has bold red walls and several mirrors in varied frames.



ZUZUNI'S Moussaka is one of the best sellers.

NIKOS Gitsis and Geni Psinakis own Zuzuni together with Geni's cousin Yorgos.

FABULOUS view from the Zuzuni balcony

Greek good life in Boracay

Zuzuni offers endearing food and accommodations

SAGANAKI, fried cheese with zesty lemon for extra flavor

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

ZUZUNI IN GREEK means little insect. But don't expect Zuzuni, the resto-resort owned by Filipino-Greek Geni Psinakis, her cousin Yorgos Psinakis and their friend Greek-American Nikos Gitsis, to have insects inside the rooms or, much worse, in their food!

Zuzuni is also a term of endearment for family, friends and pets. With Zuzuni's yummy food and cozy rooms, one will instantly be endeared to the place.

According to Geni, the design of the rooms really don't have a motif. She said they had in mind their friends and family while planning the place together with designer Miguel Rosales.

"We wanted a place that we could imagine our friends and people we knew, including ourselves, feeling comfortable staying and hanging out in, eating and drinking at every day," she said.

"We wanted it warm, simple, comfortable, luxurious but not pretentious, cozy and inviting."

Those are the same adjectives that will pop into your head when you look at the rooms. With tropical and minimalist décor, a brown and cream color scheme plus paneled lighting on the ceiling and mood lights, Zuzuni's rooms are simple yet sophisticated, chic yet comfy.

And since Zuzuni has only four rooms, the service is very personalized, very boutique-hotel style. "You feel as if you're a guest in someone's home—not just another guest at a big resort," Geni says. "Our staff is also wonderful, very warm, competent, friendly and accommodating."

The big plus is that downstairs, there's food to order during most parts of the day.

Since Geni, Yorgos and Nikos are part Greek, authentic Greek cuisine is served in the restaurant that can seat 40 inside and accommodate 50 outside.

"Typical Greek/Mediterranean food is quite varied," Geni explains. "But in general, it is quite healthy and uses a lot of olive oil, which everyone knows has countless health benefits."

"Greek food is also simple, so you really get to taste and appreciate all of the ingredients that go into any given dish," Geni adds.

"There aren't heavy sauces covering up the fresh tomato or the fresh fish, for example, so you can really taste the lemon, oregano, fish or whatever it is that makes up the dish."

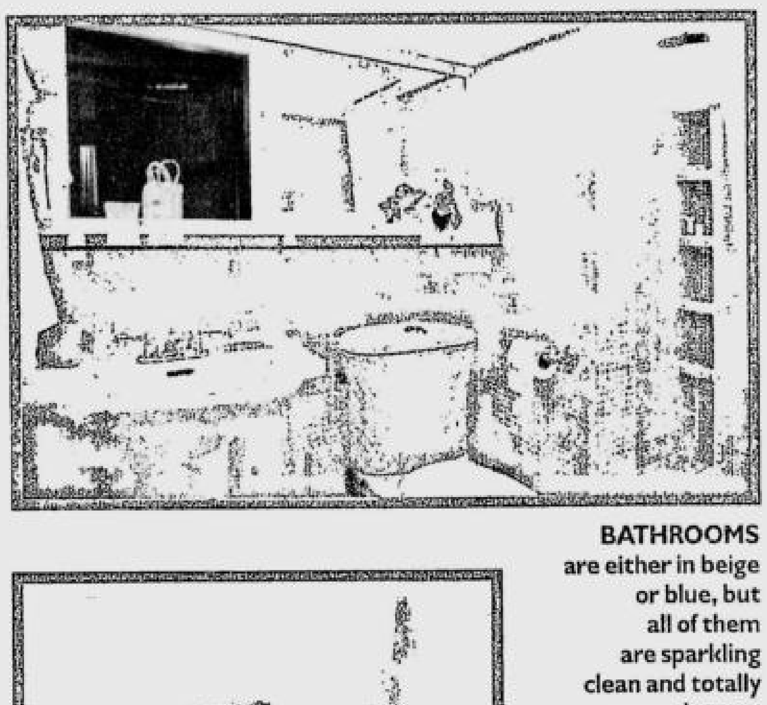
Of the house specialties and best sellers, I loved the Mati Salad consisting of Romaine and Aragula topped with parmesan shavings, sun-dried tomato and a tangy, tasty balsamic vinaigrette. My taste buds also enjoyed the Moussaka and Zuzuni Omelettes with generous amounts of bacon, tomato and cream cheese inside.

And then there are the desserts! Their Halva Ice Cream is subtle but satisfying while their Chocolate Sin—a dome of warm chocolate goodness with a scoop of ice cream—is extremely sinful that you need to do the sign of the cross after every spoonful.

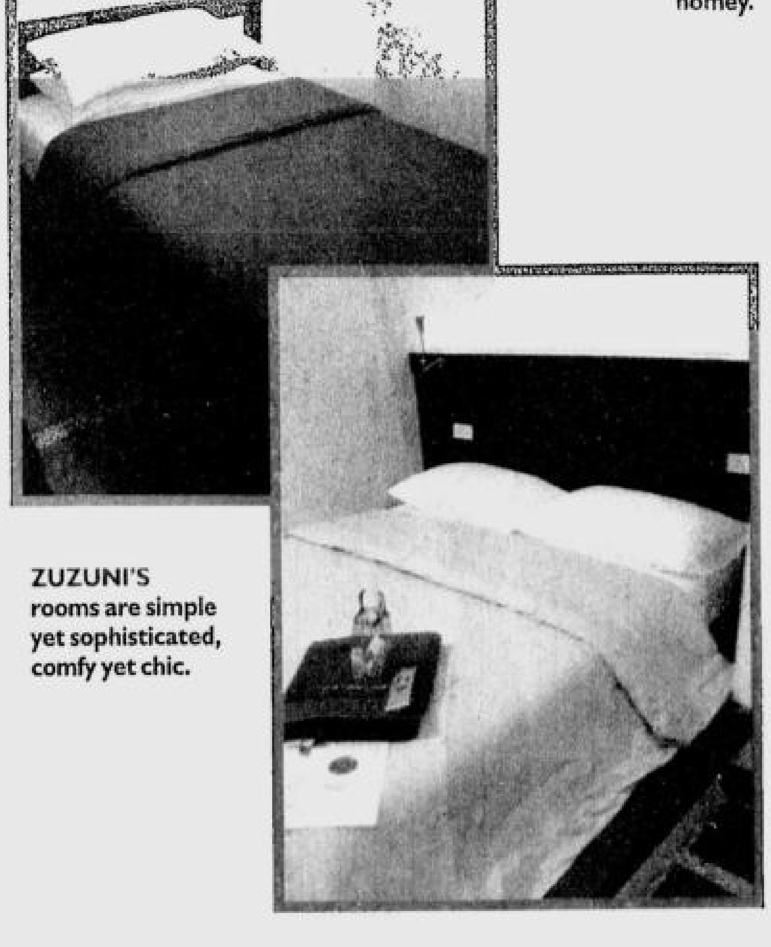
The best thing about the cuisine is that it is authentic Greek/Mediterranean food, with ingredients imported from Greece.

Accepted very well by both Filipinos and foreigners, Zuzuni's eats are a major must-try for any food-lover. And after your first try, you'll definitely want to come back for more—especially the Chocolate Sin. Trust me. That's exactly what I did.

Zuzuni's room rates are US$150 per night for the two beachfront rooms and US$85-110 for the inner rooms. To book at Zuzuni, call 02-8437308.



BATHROOMS are either in beige or blue, but all of them are sparkling clean and totally homey.



ZUZUNI'S rooms are simple yet sophisticated, comfy yet chic.

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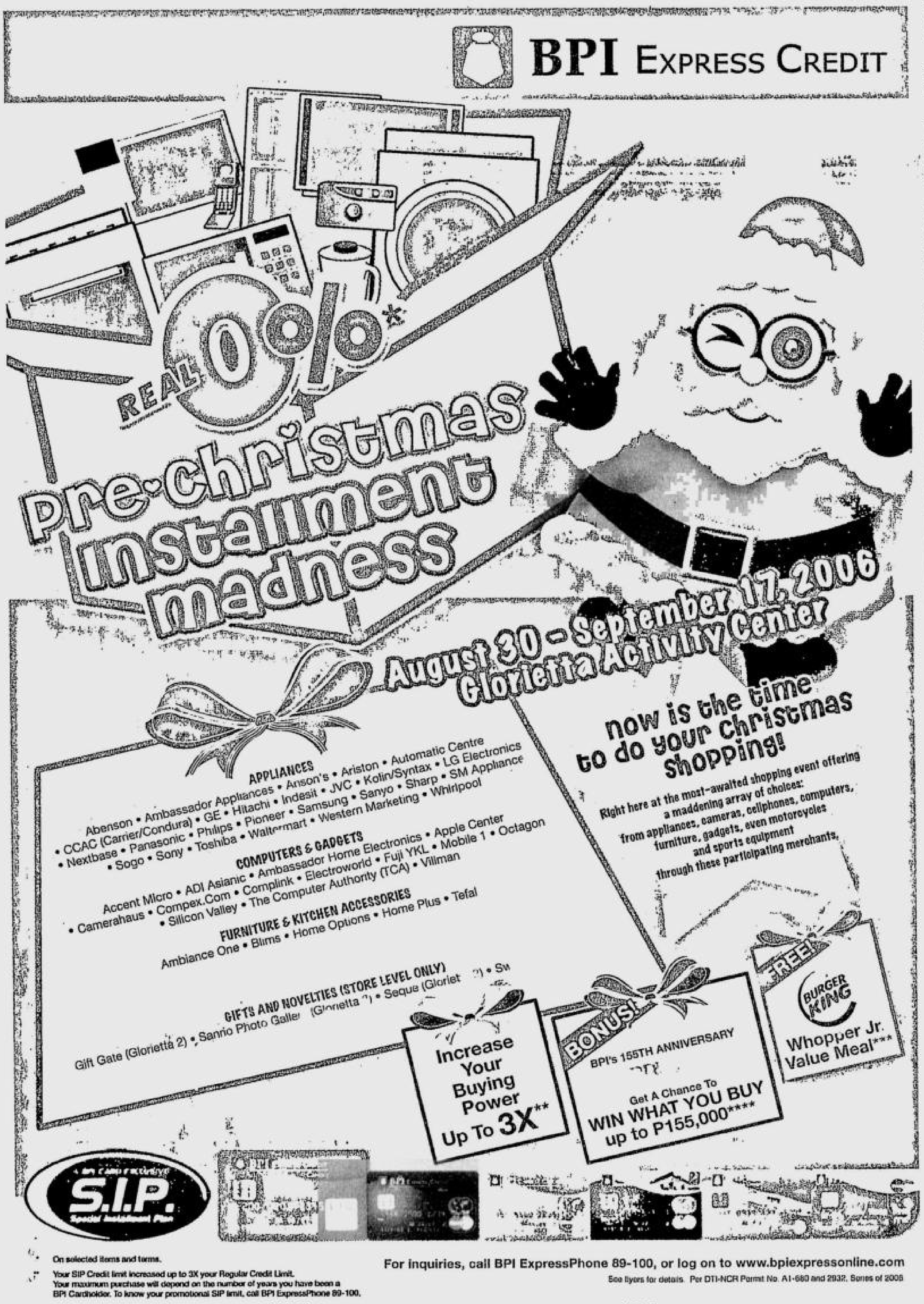

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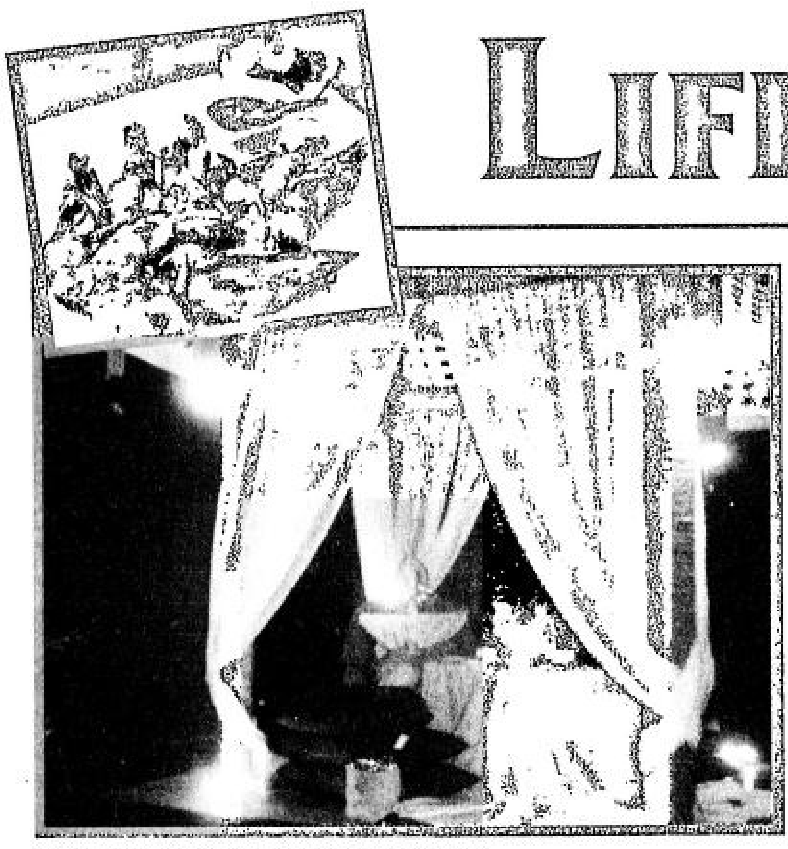

MAGICAL by night; Grilled Prawns (inset)

Sun, sand and flavors

Text and photos by Arlene M. Paredes
2bU! Correspondent

Patio Pacific's healthy, scrumptious and detoxifying Chinese cuisine is a must-try in Boracay

IN BORACAY, YOU GIVE ALL your senses a real treat. Your eyes feast on the colors of ultimate tropical beauty that is your hideaway. Your nose inhales unpolluted paradise air. Your skin either basks in the warm sunlight during summer or enjoys the cool drizzle during rainy days. Your ears enjoy the music of the tropics, away from the crazy hustle and bustle of the city.

And your taste buds celebrate luscious organic flavors devoid of toxic artificial ingredients.

INQUIRER 2bU! dined at Garden Café in Patio Pacific to sample its healthy, scrumptious and detoxifying Chinese cuisine.

Among the soups I sampled, the delicious Egg Drop Soup and nutritious Tomato Soup were top favorites. Garden Café's Tomato Soup was so flavorful that it left a tinge of pepper and spices in my mouth as I waited for the appetizer and main course.

For appetizer, nothing beats Patio Pacific's Ocean Splash Garden Salad with special vinaigrette dressing. The mere act of gently pouring the vinaigrette on this generous splash of fresh crisp lettuce, cucumber, tomatoes and onions with slices of boiled egg and chunks of tuna

SUN/ D2

SCHOOL of ROCKMOTO

1. All interested band-applicants must meet the following criteria:
   i. Amateur and unsigned bands, and with no recorded material with national radio exposure.
   ii. Bands with members between the ages of 16-25 years.
2. Interested band-applicants should submit ALL of the following, along with the application form:
   i. Band profile
   ii. Band photo
   iii. Properly labeled demo music in MP3 format containing the following:
      i. One (1) original rock song
   iv. Lyrics of the song encoded in MSWord or typewritten.
3. Submit or mail entries to the Eventscape office located at #35 Ecoville Executive Townhouses, Metropolitan Ave., Makati City contact # 8957471/8972472 (look for Michelle Cabinbin).
4. Entries may also be submitted through partner organizations found within the following campuses: UPD, UPM, DLSU, DLSU-CSB, ADMU, UST. A one-week ROCKMOTO recruitment campaign will be held within partner campuses.
5. Deadline for submission of entries is on September 11, 2006 at 12 noon.
6. Entries with incomplete requirements will automatically be disqualified.
7. Only 16 bands will make it to the ROCKMOTO: Moto School of Rock Workshops and will be contacted via their official point person.
8. The ROCKMOTO: Moto School of Rock will be facilitated by the country's best rock professionals. The workshops will be held on a 2-day weekend where participants could get tips and instructions. The workshops will serve as a pre-qualifier for the ROCKMOTO Band Competition.
9. The ROCKMOTO Band Competition will be the venue for all 16 qualifying bands to showcase their skill and compete against one another and will be judged for the following criteria: stage performance, musicality, originality/ song composition and audience impact.
10. The ROCKMOTO Band Competition winner will receive the following: PhP 50,000, a multiple bar tours around the metro's hottest bar, a 6-month management contract, media exposure and a MotoROKR E2 handset for each of the band members.
11. Motorola reserves the right to use any of the materials submitted or performed by the participants during the competition for promotions and other purposes.
12. All materials submitted and recorded by the participants will become the property of Motorola. Motorola reserves the right not to return these materials to the bands.
13. Motorola reserves the right to disqualify any band with just cause.
14. Employees of Motorola Philippines, its agencies, promo suppliers and their respective relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity are disqualified from joining the competition.

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*Suggested Retail Prices are subject to change without prior notice.

Bling on the water

By Ryan R. Reyes

WITH OUR wet-and-windy Boracay takeover on a proverbial roll, it's only fitting that we try on the biggest and baddest bling the island paradise has—the luxury sailcraft M/S Vianelle.

The trimaran (meaning the vessel has three hulls, making it buoy steadier than most seacraft even in the splashiest of waters), which was docked by the Fairways and Bluewaters resort and golf course when we went aboard for a ride, just conjures up images of high living.

The 72-foot yacht, which is proudly Pinoy in concept and make, is actually a throwback to the Bora shore staple vessel, the *paraw*. All of the ship's three hulls, plus the cabin and structural parts of the interior, are made of wood with hand-laid fiberglass construction.

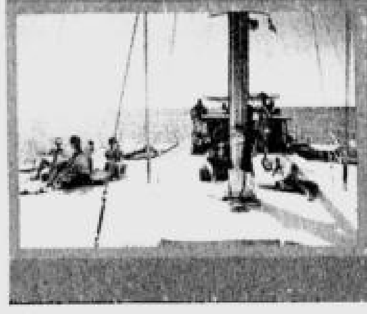
The yacht's gracious skipper, Liechtenstein-born Marcelo Kaicer, took us for a look around the boat's interiors, including the elegant teakwood-set cockpit and the four double cabins and four sleeping quarters, before setting sail across the waters from the Bora shore to neighboring Panay island.

The trimaran is available for sunset sails around Boracay three times a week, as well as for charter for parties, island-hopping diving trips and safaris. Most watersports are available on deck upon request.

It's no work at all having a grand time aboard this boat. Aside from the luxury it offers, it's pretty evident that the vessel is well-maintained and is in top sailing shape. On top of its first-class Mitsubishi 8DC9 320hp V-8 Engine, Vianelle is enrolled in the Philippine Coast Guard Auxilliary and is staffed by an on-board Swiss medical-approved lifeguard, with a full complement of safety equipment.

The day we set sail, the wind was rushing past, but the vessel was built to walk on the jumpiest of waters with its 200-sq m sail and the latest in navigational equipment. Lounging on deck with your can of cold beer, the gorgeous view of the clear waters and the neighboring islands around you, you felt like a million dollars, even if only for a few hours.

LIQUID luxury



My Bora climbing ex

Text by Arlene M. Paredes
Photos by Mark Sablan
2bU! Correspondents

IF YOU SPORTS ENTHUSIASTS out there ever decide to fly to Boracay during the rainy season, remember you may miss doing some water sports, but you can still flex your muscles right in the comfort of Patio Pacific, the only resort with wall-climbing facility that is perfect for fun-filled *barkada* sports.

This author tried wall-climbing for the first time. I didn't really expect to make it to the top. Sometimes it's better to just enjoy the journey, or in the case of wall-climbing, the way to the top, than be too occupied with the destination.

We climbers first checked the equipment at the Patio Pacific Alpha Fitness Centre and did some warm-up exercises to stretch our muscles.

Legwork

"Remember, use the power of your legs and feet," Kuya Richard of Patio Pacific told me as he helped me don the harness that would ensure my safety during the climb.

"Keep this rope between your arms and don't let it bother you," he said, noting that some beginners mess with the rope, making their climb more difficult than it should be.

Whether my legs and feet have sufficient "power" for the climb, I was going to find out.

Curiously though, when I looked closely at the holds on wall, I was thinking of how to hold rather than step on them. I was definitely thinking of handwork rather than footwork. This would later result in shocked and stressed arms the morning after.

(After the climb, I read some stories on wall climbing. I learned that beginners are not likely to understand that the sport requires more precision in footwork than anything else.)

I asked the guide if it would be okay to climb barefooted since I didn't think my beach sandals could help make the climb any easier. Kuya Richard said some people actually prefer to climb barefooted. So I did.

After the first few steps, my instinct was telling me to look up and check the distance left from the top. This is wrong. This is not enjoying the journey, this is impatience.

The right thing to do is look down and check for holds to step on. Once you found another hold to stick your foot on, that's when you look up to find a handhold that could clear several inches to the top. Progress in steps and give in to the thrill, not fear,

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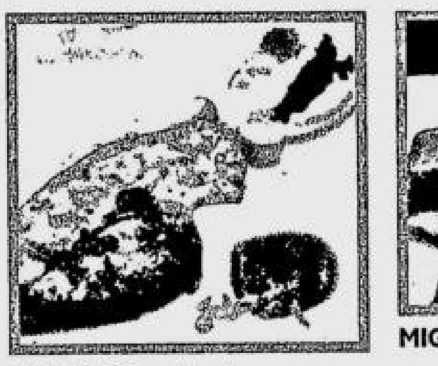

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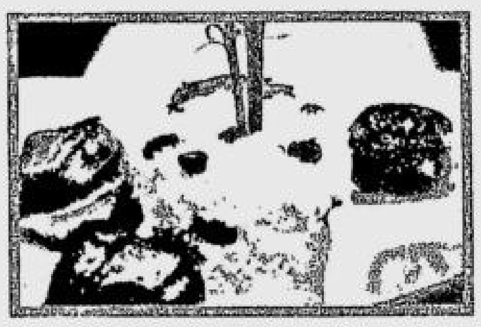

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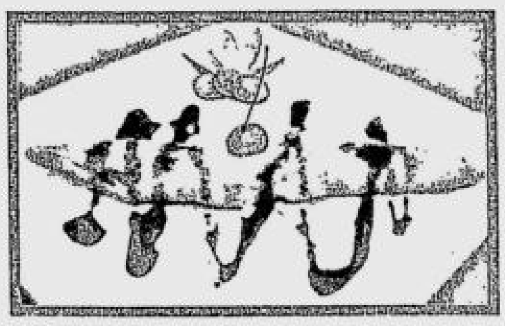

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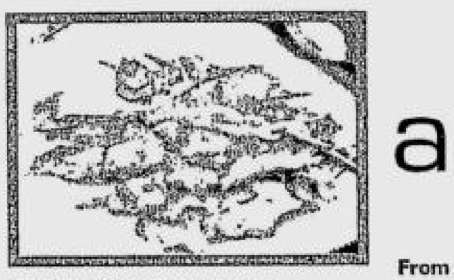
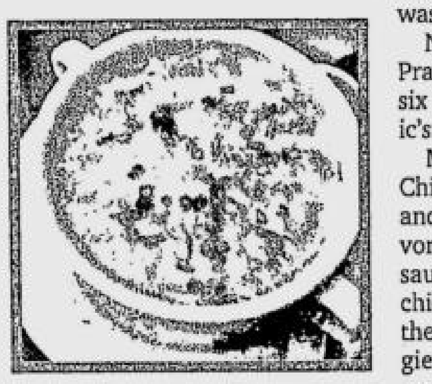


YOGA Chicken Skewers



EGG Drop Soup

Sun, sand and flavors

From page D1

was already quite. And at only P180, it was a definite treat.

Next, try Patio Pacific Grilled Prawns. Fresh, juicy and delicious, the six huge prawns came with Patio Pacific's very own red sauce, at only P300.

My other favorite was the Yoga Chicken Skewers, marinated in yoghurt and garlic then grilled to perfection. Savor the smooth creaminess of the white sauce blending deliciously with the chicken meat in your mouth. Also try the white sauce with other meat or veggies on your table. This set of six chicken skewers came at P175.

If you're craving for bacon or thinking of a heavy and filling breakfast, try Mignon de Porc Al'ail. My serving came with four pork mignons wrapped in bacon, pan seared then served with gravy, at P350.

For a low-fat, protein-rich serving, try Wasabe Tuna Steak for only P150.

As a chicken meat lover, I just had to try the succulent Steamed White Chicken with special Chinese wine mixed in the white sauce. A small serving cost P165; medium, P220; and large, P275.

For dessert, the mango crepe laced with rich chocolate syrup (P120) was a great way to cap a fully satisfying meal.

Among Garden Café milkshakes, my favorite was the Mega Watermelon Milkshake (P150). Try thi
soothing blend that goes rig
meal, any time of the day.

At Garden Café, you can
that a particular dish be cook
specific instructions. The
chef, Jomar Bartolome, and
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If you want your dinner
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Garden Café teahouse, whe
your date can call the place
Garden Café is in Patio Pa
Station 1, Balabag, Boracay

Surf, sounds and phones

Sony Ericsson equipped the 2bU! correspondents with phones during their stay in rainy Boracay. They fell in love with the island—and with the gadgets they reviewed

Cool cat: Sony Ericsson W550i

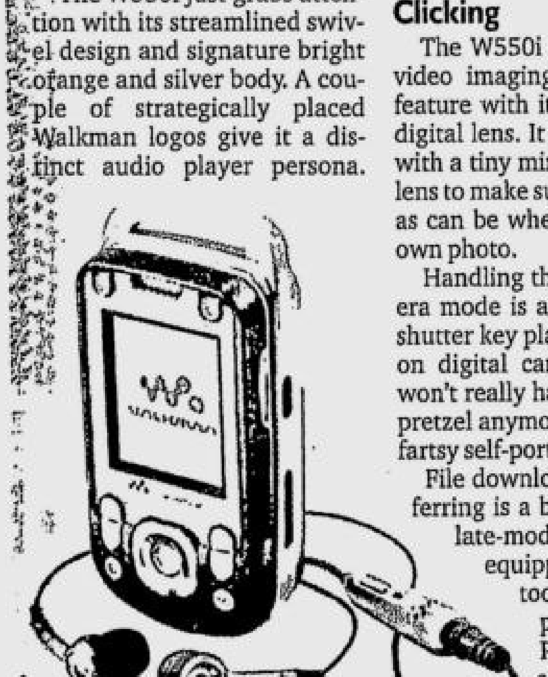
By Ryan R. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

WHEN THE EVER-innovative Sony Ericsson decided to license the "Walkman" name from Sony Corp., it was a clear sign that mobile technology is heading sweetly uphill. When they released their Walkman series—mobile lifestyle gadgets that come with easy-interfaced mp3 and radio music players—every self-respecting tech buff took notice.

If you're fun, funky, and with a rabid zeal for music-on-the-go, SE W550i may make you flip.

The hippest of the Walkman series mobiles, this phone just fits the fun, fearless lifestyle of the young.

The W550i just grabs attention with its streamlined swivel design and signature bright orange and silver body. A couple of strategically placed Walkman logos give it a distinct audio player persona.



And it's not just fetching looks alone that this cool mobile offers—it boasts a boat-load of additional features that guarantees no bland moments with it in tow.

Walk this way

Its prime selling point is the digital Walkman—a throwback to the first portable music craze that had the world bopping around with ears plugged tight. The sound quality is amazing. The W550i is equipped with three powerful speakers with a MegaBass feature. The player interface is very user-friendly, with its multiple personal playlist feature. If you want to take a break from your music files, it also has a neat triband GSM radio player for you.

Clicking

The W550i also has a great video imaging and recording feature with its 1.3-megapixel digital lens. It is also equipped with a tiny mirror panel by the lens to make sure you're snazzy as can be when you take your own photo.

Handling the phone in camera mode is a breeze, with its shutter key placed just like it is on digital cameras (yes, you won't really have to look like a pretzel anymore in those artsy-fartsy self-portraits.)

File downloading and transferring is a breeze. Like most late-model handsets, it is equipped with Bluetooth and infrared ports, as well as a PC suite and USB cable.

W300i for the young music lover

By Arlene M. Paredes
2bU! Correspondent

I'M PRETTY SMALL BUT I'VE got everything you need." It seems to be the message of yet another music phone from Sony Ericsson, the W300i.

The W300i boasts of funky style and effective functionality in a compact 3.5 x 1.8 x 1 inches of beauty. This quadband Edge technology comes with an integrated VGA camera, which is good for photo enthusiasts who do not want to carry anything more than 94 g device in their pocket.

With 4x digital zoom, the camera should work well for close-range interesting subjects worthy of space in your mobile.

This clamshell SE baby has Bluetooth, a phone memory of 20 MB, Memory Stick Micro support, and USB connectivity.

I had a little problem with the very pretty keypad, which, despite its beauty, doesn't match my rather fat thumb. Still, it wasn't too difficult for me. I was already comfortable with it by the second day.

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W810i: Phone, camera and mp3 player in one

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A DEVOTED Nokia user. So imagine my hesitation when I was handed the Sony Ericsson W810i to test for two weeks. Sure, it looked beautiful with its black shell and little orange details, but I wondered if it was just all looks. I also wanted to know if it was better or more special than other phones.

And so I popped in my SIM card and turned the phone on—and was greeted with two choices: phone mode or music-only mode. At first, I though it was a pretty stupid idea. Why would I want a music-only mode when the music function is available when I'm switched on to phone mode? And then I had to hop on the plane, die of boredom and discover that I could actually use the W810i inside a plane without being snapped at by the stewardess, thanks to the phone's music-only mode.

One of the W810i's most adorable features is definitely its music player. With its folders for artists and customized playlists, plus music controls with a distinct functional appearance, the W810i is undoubtedly very easy to use.

Supporting playback of mp3 and AAC audio, the W810i also has bonuses like an FM radio with radio data support, a 512 MB Memory Stick PRO Duo with enough memory for up to 175 songs and the Disc2Phone music copying software, which makes copying songs from CDs and PC music folders to the phone no-sweat.

Let's not forget the sound quality of the phone. I discovered, much to my ears' delight, that it is very clear. It's so clear that when my phone rang to the tune of Christina Aguilera's "Ain't No Other Man," I didn't want to answer the call and, instead, I just listened to the rest of the song. That is how beautiful the quality of the W810i's sound is.

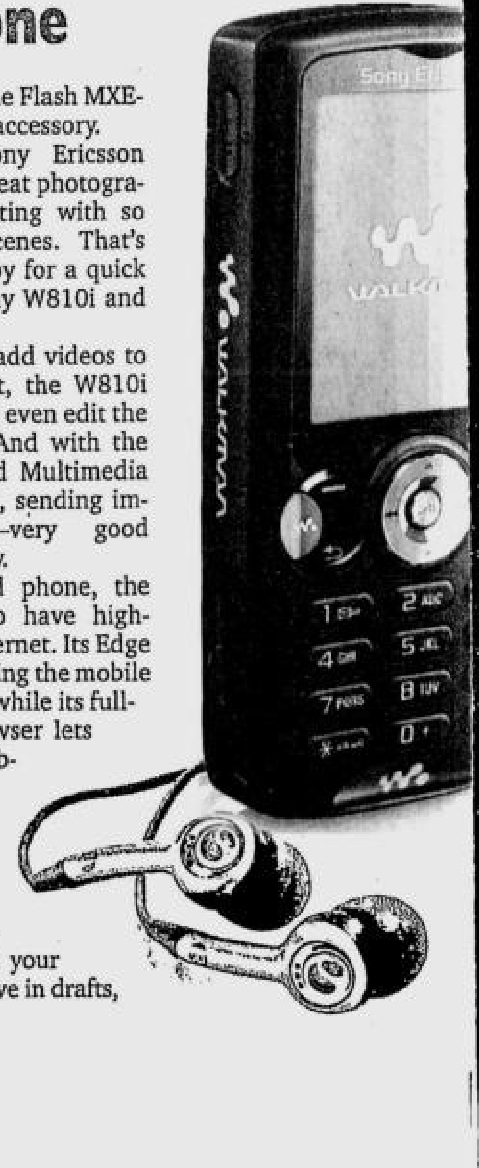
And then there's the camera! The W810i has a built-in 2-megapixel digital camera with autofocus that takes excellent photographs. Fun extras include cute frames, picture effects (black and white, negative, sepia and solarize) and entertaining shutter sounds. For better lighting conditions, the phone has a photo light. But if you need a photo flash, you can snap on a Phone Flash MXE-60, an optional W810i accessory.

With the new Sony Ericsson W810i, you can be a great photographer. Boracay is bursting with so many click-worthy scenes. That's why when I dropped by for a quick visit, I fully charged my W810i and went click-crazy.

When you want to add videos to your YouTube account, the W810i has video, too. You can even edit the clips using VideoDJ. And with the phone's Bluetooth and Multimedia messaging capabilities, sending images and videos—very good ones—is very, very easy.

Just like any good phone, the W810i allows one to have high-speed access to the Internet. Its Edge technology makes surfing the mobile Internet fast and easy while its full-function Internet browser lets one view the best websites around.

You don't even have to use your computer or laptop to check your e-mail. With the Sony Ericsson W810i, you can check your mail, read and reply, save in drafts,



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THE AUTHOR gets an idea of how it feels to be Spider-Girl.

I was laughing when I grabbed on the last handhold to the top. Not knowing I could do it but enjoying anyway resulted in an awesome "Dear Diary" moment. I finally did it!

Bell

"Ring the bell!" Kuya Richard yelled.

"What bell?" I yelled back. I was so high throughout the course that I forgot I was supposed to pull the bell string once I had cleared the wall.

Of course, it's not over until the bell rings!

After ringing the bell, I held on tight to the rope as I was told and just let gravity take care of me. What can I say, it's always exciting to fall if you know someone's going to catch you.

Once I was back on the ground, Kuya Richard first checked my hands for any scrape or cut. Clear. Then he asked me what body part was most stressed at that point. I said my arms. And my fingers were still shaking. He laughed, "You didn't do it right." I pleaded guilty. But I was still definitely ecstatic.

Now remember, your legs are stronger than your arms. Trust your legs to place your foot properly on the holds. Use them well. The next time I try wall-climbing, I'll bear that in mind.

Pampering

After the climb, what should one do?

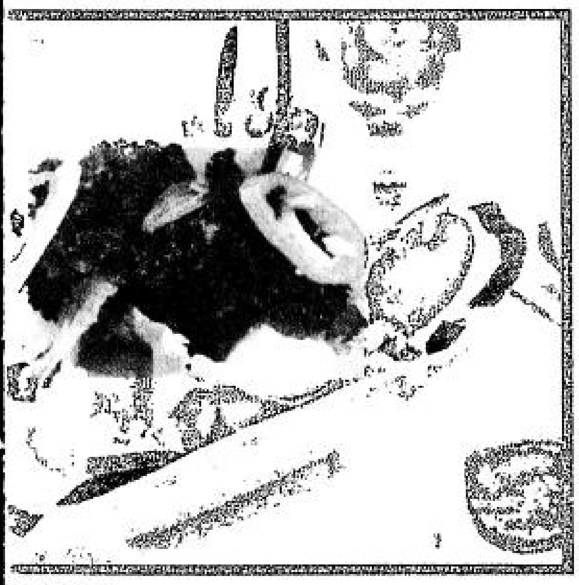
Do cool-down exercises to relax the muscles.

Alpha Wellness Centre boasts of cutting-edge equipment for pampering the body, the Alpha Capsule. This "unearthly" capsule combines dry-heat sauna, aromatherapy, ionized air (healthy molecules absorbable by the human body), massage and soothing music for a completely relaxing experience.

A 30-minute stay inside the Alpha Capsule and a separate 30-minute Swedish massage are more than enough rewards for the wall-climbing challenge this author had to face.

E-mail the author at lhenparedes@gmail.com

MAKING her first-ever attempt at wall-climbing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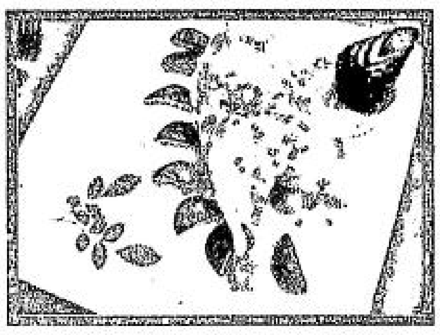
STEAMED White Chicken

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E-mail the author at lhenparedes@gmail.com

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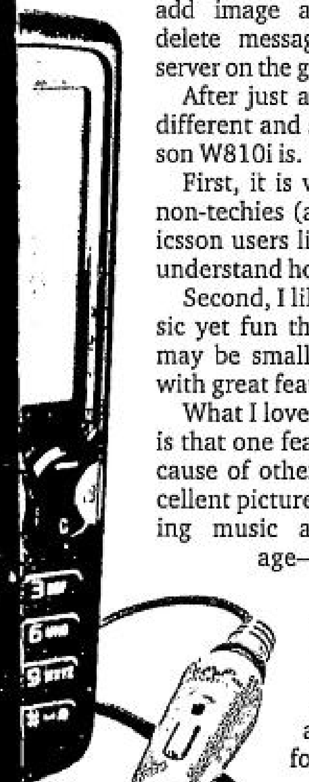


add image attachments and even delete messages from your e-mail server on the go.

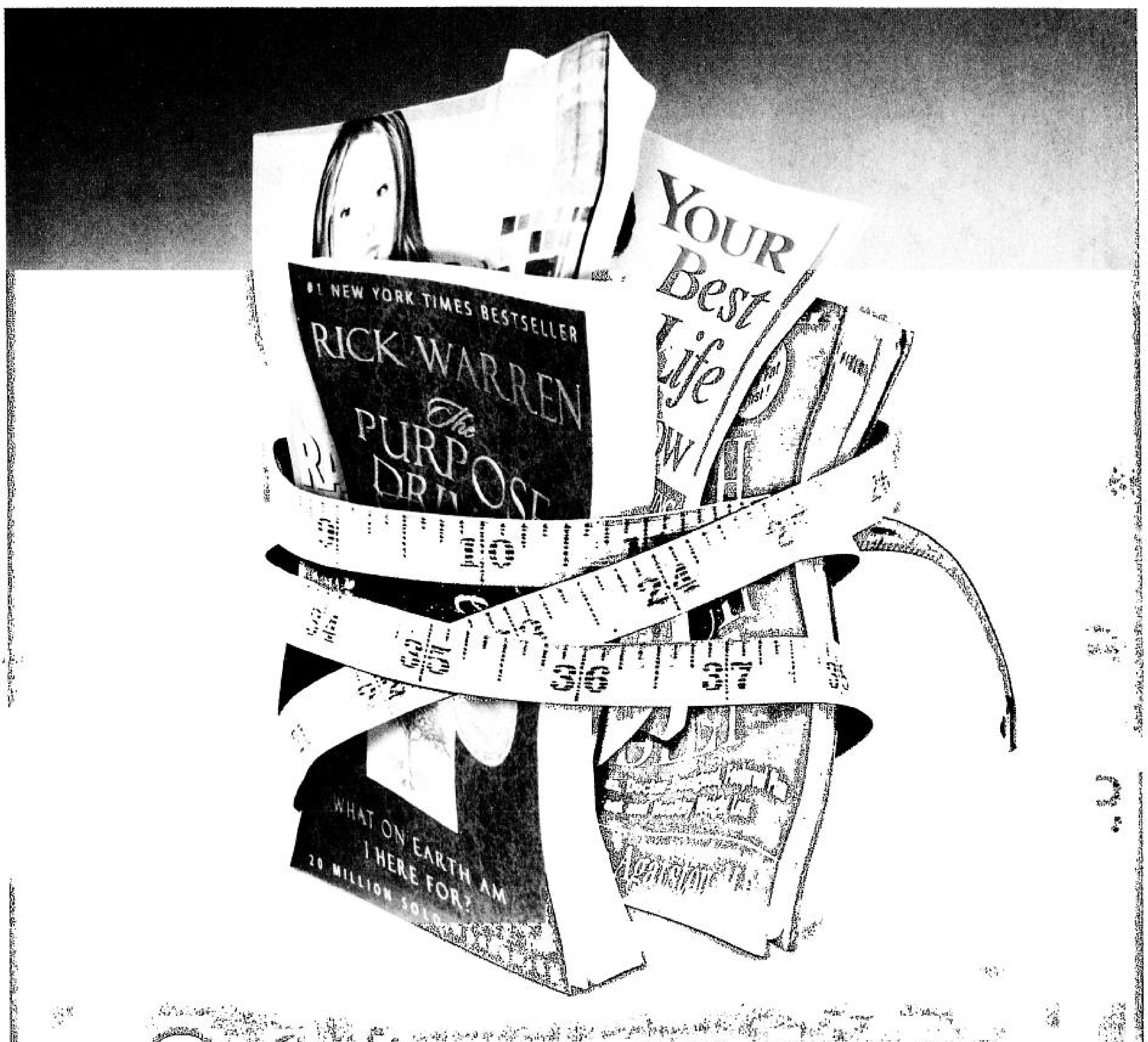
After just a week, I realized how different and special the Sony Ericsson W810i is.

First, it is very easy to use. Even non-techies (and first-time Sony Ericsson users like me) will be able to understand how to use the phone.

Second, I like how classy and classic yet fun the phone looks like. It may be small but it sure is loaded with great features.

What I love most about the W810i is that one feature doesn't suffer because of other features. It takes excellent pictures, plays superb-sounding music and allows big storage—all at the same time.

I have been a very devoted and loyal Nokia user all my life, but after stumbling into the Sony Ericsson W810i and eventually falling for it, I think the time has finally come for me to switch brands.



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STYLES ROCK NATION

Check out the latest brands from the Boys Teen's Wear Department - **Lost, Tattoo, 575 and Tripp** give you the hottest trends that bring out that rock spirit in you.

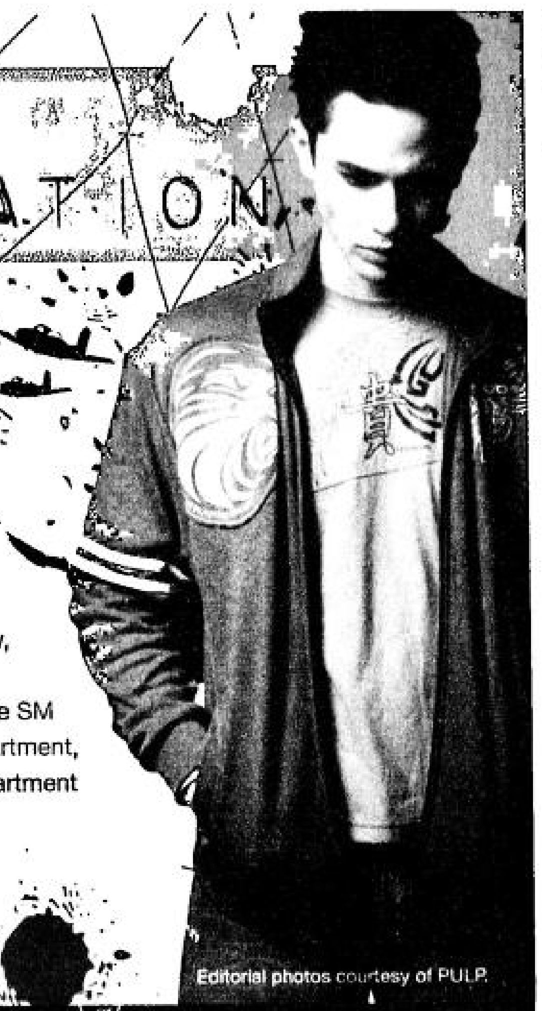
LOST and TATTOO feature a wide selection of graphic shirts and long, layered - sleeves with a decidedly confident edge.

The latest craze, which Tattoo and Lost carry is the inside - out print : graphics and logos placed on the inside of tops but peer through the outside.

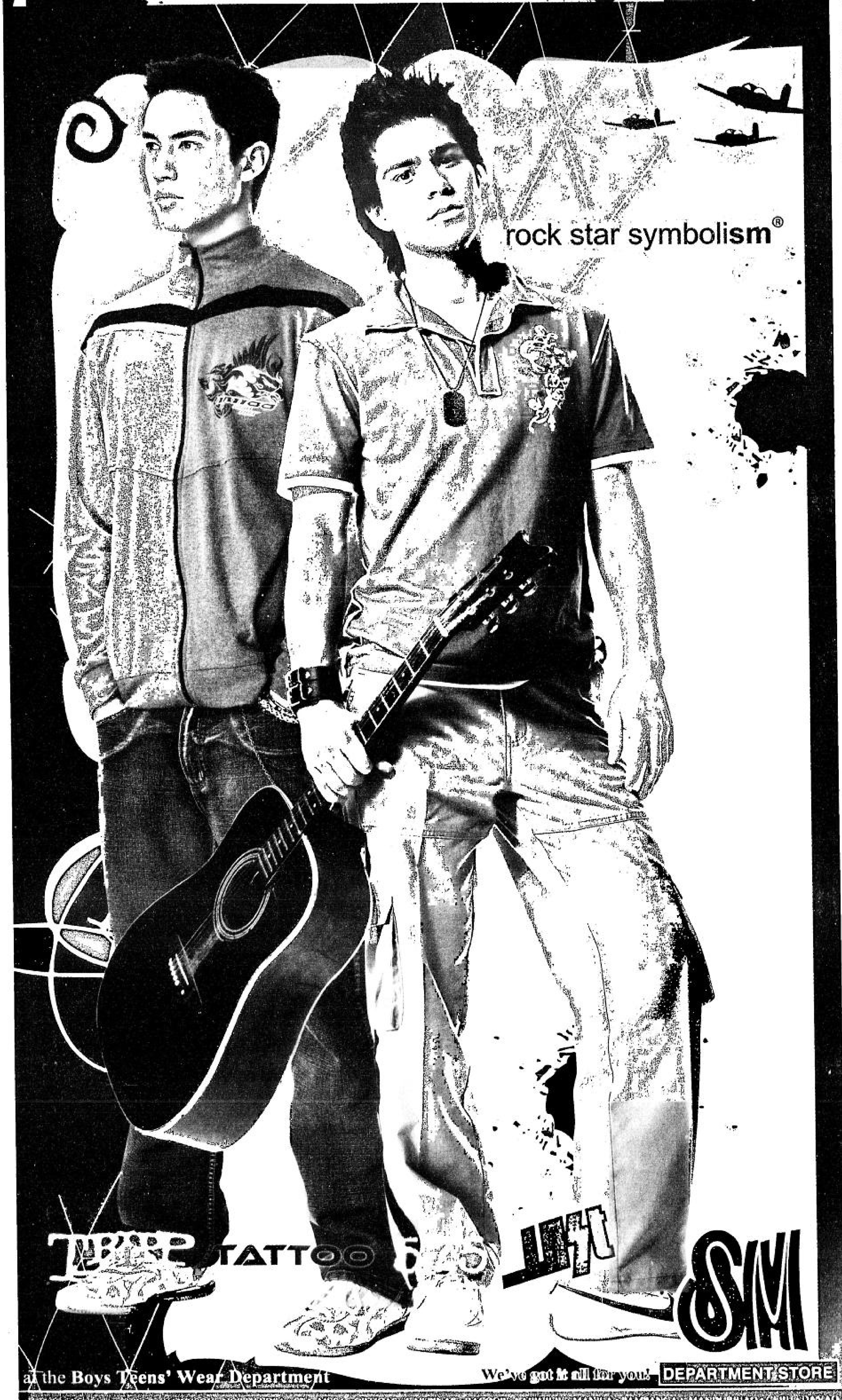
On the other hand, Pants from 575 and TRIPP have very unique stitchings and detailings with varied washes in different yet masculine hues. Tripp and 575 styles come in classic yet more comfortable fit with a touch of modern twist.

The trick is to come up with a look that will create a major fashion statement yet gives off a vibe of effortless style.

If you're wondering how, then check out these collections only from the SM Boys Teen's Wear Department, available at all SM Department Stores nationwide.



Editorial photos courtesy of PULP.



at the Boys Teens' Wear Department

We've got it all for you! DEPARTMENT STORE

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What makes you a rock star?

MORE AND MORE 2BU! READERS are getting in on the "Rockstar Supernova" craze!

Unleash your inner rock star to win exclusive premium items from Star World's top-rating reality TV show. Keep sending us your most recent high-resolution photos at a rockin' gig, and tell us in five sentences or less, what makes your life rock.

All entries must be e-mailed to rockstar_2bu@yahoo.com. Just don't forget to include all the juicy details (your full name, date, place, gig/band).

Each week, up to three rocked-out readers will win cool prizes from "Rock Star: Supernova" and have their winning entries published in upcoming 2bU! issues. So go ahead and rock our world, you know you want to!

"Rock Star: Supernova" airs live, exclusively on Star World every Wednesdays (8:30 a.m.) and Thursdays (8 a.m.), with primetime broadcasts at 8 p.m. on the same day.

Here are last week's winners who give us reasons why they think they rock!

- Sam Santos (Date: Aug. 25' 06; Place: Ateneo High School music room; Gig: Music project!!! XD)

"Life rocks because of friends who stick it out with me in good and bad times. This musical project proved that working together made all the sacrifices and results all worth it."

- Harriet "Ayie" Jorday Contreras (This is my boyfriend, Troy. This was during one of our gigs at Iba, Zambales, last summer 2006.)

"It rocks that me, my boyfriend and closest friends have our own band called LCD or Life Conquers Death. We get to play for a good cause that benefits out-of-school youths and students."

- Lorelei "Bing" de la Cruz (Date: August 2003; Place: Town Plaza, Los Baños, Laguna; Gig/Band: The Norms competing in the Battle of the Bands during the Bañamos Festival)

"My Singles For Christ brothers formed a band called The Norms where I was the lead vocalist. We've disbanded, but performing onstage for large crowds always gave me an adrenalin rush and now a life full of great memories."

Winners can claim their prizes by calling Cindy Corrales of Stratworks at 7513805 or 06.

TROY rocks hard.

BING de la Cruz and The Norms

SAM Santos and his music project

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SOS Guimaras

Don't cry over spilled oil—do something about it

ILLUSTRATION: LA MISTADES

By Pam Pastor

WHEN GUIMARAS became a province in 1992, it was called "The Island to Watch" because of so much promise that its resources bring. Aside from mango, its signature crop, it has long stretches of white-sand beaches, remarkable dive spots and rich fishing grounds. These resources brought the best out of Guimaras, and took it out of the list of 20 poorest provinces in the Philippines.

"However, disaster struck. On 11 August 2006, the tanker MT Solar 1, which was carrying two-million liters of bunker fuel, sank off our southern coast while battling rough waters. Several hours later, our long stretches of white-sand beaches, remarkable dive spots and rich fishing grounds became despicable sights with black, thick oil covering them.

"It's an 8/11 tragedy for us! Guimaras remained 'The Island to Watch' but this time, it is a death watch. The sinking of the tanker gave a blow of death to us, hitting us where it hurts most.

"Yet, as we now gasp for air to survive the catastrophe, the source of the blow is just an arm-stretch away, delivering punches bit by bit until who knows when."

This is the message of JC Rahman Nava M.D., the governor of Guimaras, found on the website, projectsunrise.org.

The oil spill off Guimaras province, considered the worst oil spill in the Philippines, has wreaked havoc on the environment. The Greenpeace, the Coast Guard and other groups and individuals are working hard on cleanup efforts while the rest of the country can't stop talking about it.

But we can do more than just talk—we can make a difference in concrete ways.

Get a haircut. There's no better reason to change your hairstyle than this. After learning from Greenpeace that human hair can be used in the cleanup efforts, hair salons—members of the Philippine International Hairdressers Association—have started collecting hair. If you want to donate hair, visit any Reyes Haircutters branch, your favorite salon or call 9136252.

Support the Visayan Sea Squadron. Headed by lawyer Antonio Oposa Jr., who specializes in environmental law, this organization started volunteer work to help out fishermen and residents who have been badly affected. Honeylette Teodisio and her friends, who all come from Iloilo, are helping the Visayan Sea Squadron by collecting donations and sending them to the affected area.

"As I type, the oil spillage slowly encompasses the areas around Guimaras Island and is now moving up toward the north through Guimaras Strait, damaging Panay and Negros in its wake," said Teodisio in an e-mail message.

"Families dependent on their fishing livelihood are robbed of their means of living. Our rich seafood is contaminated, and we are slowly but surely being killed by health problems resulting from this terrible environmental disaster.

"The volunteers and fisherfolk are working to clean up the damage, with no thought of their health. They go through the muck in sandals and slippers, with not even a mask to protect their lungs."

You may help them by donating fishing rubber boots, rubber gloves and masks. They also accept donations of hair and chicken feathers to create brooms needed to mop up the oil.

The first shipment of donations will be sent today while the next one is scheduled on Sept. 5. If you are in the Quezon City area, donations may be sent to 12 Highland Drive, Blueridge A Katipunan, Quezon City.

You can also drop off donations at the College of Fine Arts in UP-Diliman, Q.C.—just look for Jen Alfon-Adano.

If you'd rather donate cash, the Visayan Sea Squad can purchase much needed materials and place the donation under your name. For more information, call Archie at 09192253262, Haydee at 09282313193 and Lette at 09157854035 or e-mail cleanupoilspill@gmail.com.

Visit projectsunrise.org, a website created as a response to the oil spill disaster. The site lists other ways you can help—by making a deposit or a check donation (pledge and donation forms may be downloaded from the website), providing tools and equipment for the cleanup, helping restore people's livelihoods and more.

You may also donate relief goods like rice, sardines, noodles, water and medicines to the 4,000 coastal families that have been directly affected by the spill. Visit Projectsunrise.org, e-mail help@projectsunrise.org or call +63 33 2371134.

Flex your blog muscles. Help spread awareness by blogging about the oil spill and what we can all do to help. There is power in numbers.

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CAGAYAN DE ORO • BICUTAN • LUCENA • BAGUIO • MARILAO • DASMARIÑAS • BATANGAS • DELGADO • SAN LAZARO • SUCAT • STA. ROSA • CLARK • MALL OF ASIA

Photo me!

Text by Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent
Photos by Ocs Alvarez

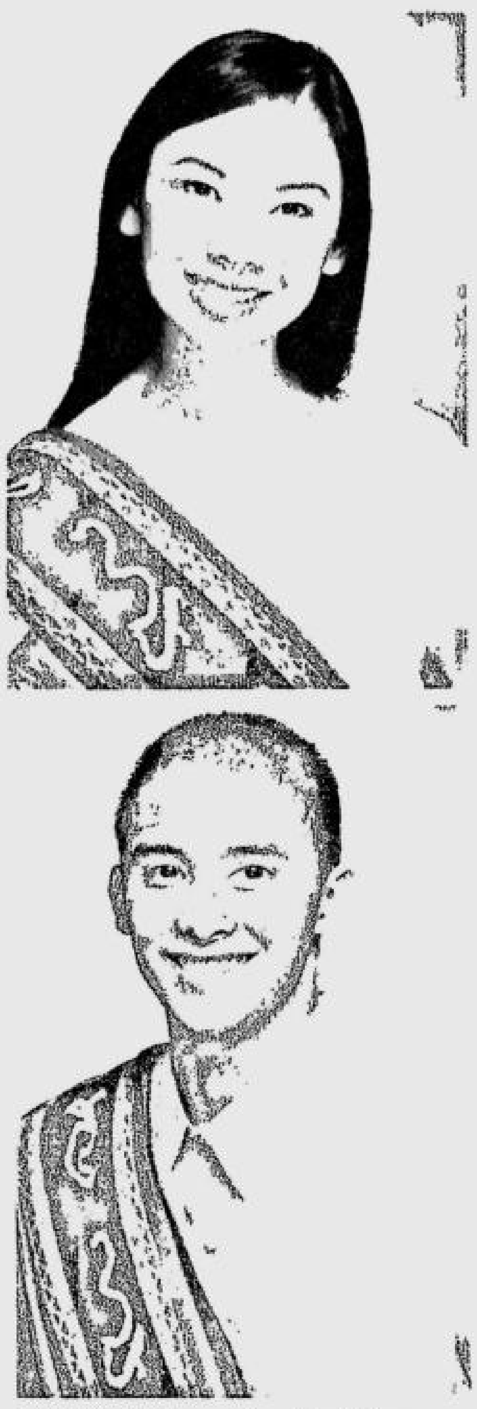
THERE'S DEFINITELY more to graduation photos than putting on a toga and smiling for the camera. Since the photos are meant to be displayed prominently in living rooms to show off to guests, and yearbooks become valuable background material after a few years (one day, if you become rich and famous, some enterprising blackmailer will inevitably publish your yearbook photo in glossy tabloids—including big hair, bad write-up and braces), it's a good idea to put more thought into your graduation photos.

Nowadays, the yearbook pages contain more than just a simple black-and-white photo and write-up per person. Creative shots, formal photos, and costumes have been added to the mix as well. This development allows more room for the graduate to express his or her personality through the pages, but only if done correctly: otherwise, all the choices can lead to confusion and half-baked photos.

Don't know what to do with your graduation photos yet? Check out 2bU!'s guide to good graduation photos, and get started on planning your picture-perfect moment.

E-mail the author at biancaconsunji@yahoo.com

Toga



AIM to look clean-cut and fresh for your graduation photo.

Do:

- Have your hair and makeup done by a professional. Your everyday lip and cheek tint will not do, since formal photos require strong lighting, which can make you look washed out if you're wearing minimal makeup. Also, make sure your hair looks neat and natural. For your toga or formal shot, you should look how you usually do every day, only a little better.

- If you can, have your makeup done elsewhere. Some photo packages include hair and makeup, but you'll be better off without them. If the cost is already tucked in, have your hair blow-dried there, but have an outsider do your makeup. Graduation photo shoots are similar to factory production lines (hair-makeup-photo) and the makeup artists on hand will not pay attention to any special requests, since they usually do just one look to save time. Also, if you're fussy about hygiene, you might want to take your business elsewhere, as the makeup artists can't be bothered to wash their brushes and sponges before each use.

- If you're having your makeup done on location, bring your own makeup if you have any. That way, you'll be sure the colors used on your face will suit you. You wouldn't want to have a "floating face" in your picture.

- Smile naturally. Ignore the photographer if he asks you to stretch your smile and neck to unnatural proportions, which can only make you look forced (and consequently unhappy) in the shot. Politely explain that you want to look like yourself, not Jim Carrey on steroids.

- Keep your look clean and classic. For jewelry, a small pair of earrings will do. Necklaces might be unnecessary as the toga already has a lot of items around the neckline.

Don't:

- Wear too much makeup. A lot of graduation photos look bad because of the quality and quantity of the makeup. Thick foundation, purple eye shadow, orange blush, red lipstick—these are all too much for one face.

- Wear a fancy or overly bouffant hairdo. There's a reason why a lot of '80s graduation photos are nowhere to be found: they're all stowed under the owners' beds.

- Do not, under any circumstances, wear flashy diamonds, gold hoop earrings, or costume jewelry for your toga photo. This will only cheapen your look, as the jewelry will seem ostentatious compared to the simple background and dark toga.

- The makeup artist is just that: a makeup artist, not a magician. Accept that too much contouring will not make you look thinner; it can only make you look like you have orange and brown stripes on your cheeks. Also, accept your God-given nose. No amount of brown eye shadow down the sides can make it look patrician.

- Go to the barber or salon for a haircut at least a week before you have your photo taken, so if anything goes wrong, you can still think of ways to salvage it.

DON'T use disco eye shadow and orange blush.

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY TATIN YANG (0917-8382846)
MODELS: MARK AGAS, MAYETTE CORDERO, CHESCA SUMILANG AND KAT VILLANUEVA
ADDITIONAL DIGITAL IMAGERY BY ERIN MCDONNEL

Formal

FIND your best angle before your shoot.

Do:

- Wear a simple but eye-catching outfit. Pick one that emphasizes your best assets without going over-the-top. You can pair your gown with a shawl or necklace, but keep in mind that the focus should be on you, not the clothes.

- Guys can opt to wear a suit or barong for the formal shot. If you're wearing a suit, skip the cartoon necktie unless you're making a statement. If you're wearing a barong, stick to the classic cream or white, and save the shiny stylized ones for a party.

Don't:

- Be too trendy. Remember how cool asymmetrical necklines were five years ago? Well, no one wears them now. Overly trendy clothes date photos. Since these photos are meant to last forever, stick to classic cuts and prints.

- Look like a debutante. Fluffy gown, large necklace, full hair and makeup—they're just too much.

Creative shot

MAKE your photo fun and easy to shoot.

Do:

-Express yourself. Choose a theme that really shows your personality. If you love books, work around that. If you're a Shakespeare fan, dress up as Juliet. If rock music is your thing, break out your electric guitar and drumsticks. Your candid photo is equally important as your write-up; it shows people who you are.

- Be original. Make your own costumes and you'll be sure no one else will look like you. Play around with hair and makeup—this may be your one chance to model.

- Insist on a one-color background. Tie-dyed or digital backgrounds haven't been used by good photographers since the '90s and will really cheapen your concept. If the studio uses a batik background, all of you—from the Indian goddess to the rock star to the ice queen—will look like kids playing dress up or washed-out show-biz starlets.

- Be confident. So what if everyone's watching you pose? They'll be going through the same thing, anyway, so don't be self-conscious. Chances are, people aren't really paying attention. They only look when you start squealing, "*Ayoko, nakakahiya*!" In that case, you shouldn't be having your photo taken in the first place.

EXPERIMENT with new looks.

Don't:

- Use the props provided by the studios. Chances are, fifty other people have used it before you, and it'll show when you flip through your yearbook pages. Also avoid using tired old props: fairy wings, tiaras, notebooks and pens, cowboy hats. In one of the studio shoots we watched, a girl dressed up as an Egyptian queen, with a beaded bra and headdress. Sure, it was cool, but it was also the costume worn by the model in the studio's sample shoot.

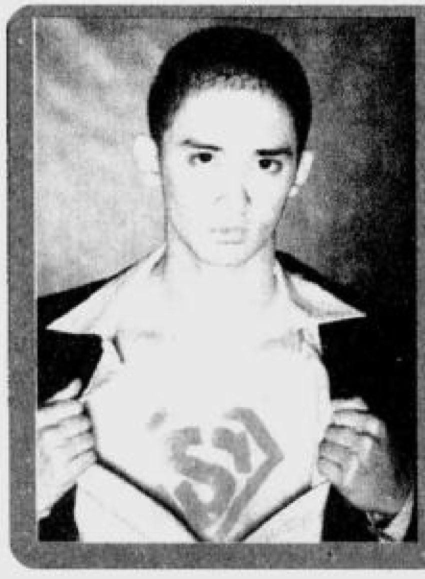
- Treat it as your personal photo shoot. Keep in mind that there is a queue behind you, so if you take too long getting your props together (or if you refuse to pose because of all the people watching), be prepared to face dagger looks and annoyed comments afterwards.

- Trust the studio's sample photos too much. The reason why they look good in the first place is because they're trying to win the students over, so each photo is styled and retouched to perfection. But in reality, they will not have the time to Photoshop your braces away. While they can clean up your eye bags and blemishes, the rest is pretty much left to you. So make sure that everything is in place: no clothing tags are sticking out, your makeup is clean, and nothing's in between your teeth.

AVOID overkill.

HAIR AND MAKEUP: TATIN YANG (0917-8382846)
MODELS: MARK AGAS, MAYETTE CORDERO, CHESCA SUMILANG AND KAT VILLANUEVA
ADDITIONAL DIGITAL IMAGERY BY ERIN MCDONNEL

Makeup for guys



PAINT on some lipstick to imitate Superman.

CREATE the illusion of 5 p.m. stubble with eye shadow for a new look.

PINK blush and lipstick are a no-no for men.

Young and hypertensive

By Ms Fine

MILDLY HYPERTENSIVE 20something seems an adequate self-description. But you wouldn't guess my condition because I look normal.

Check my bloodwork results, all is within the ideal level, from sugar to uric acid. My weight is proportioned to my height. I lead an active lifestyle. I may have a couple of extra bulges tucked in certain areas of my body, but what regular girl my age doesn't?

Hypertension runs in the family. I knew I was getting it someday, perhaps when I'm obese and have excessively indulged on calories, but not this soon.

That I was a rare case (everyone knows hypertension is common to older folk) freaked me out twice, no, thrice as much.

"Mild" didn't make the condition less imposing.

I was a worry wart who worried about things others wouldn't give the slightest notice: dust accumulating on my office desk, contact with germs on door handles, tripping on the stairs, missing a step on an escalator, getting squashed between elevator doors. When people didn't care to worry, I did the worrying for them.

The habit was so unshakeable it led me to believe any form of hypertension was the same as that which eventually caused my grandfather's fatal stroke.

I worried about worrying too much until my blood pressure would go up.

As it did, numerous times, even when I hadn't been under pressure or physical strain.

I barely ate junk food. I cut down on meats and salty food, added more fiber to my diet, yet nothing worked.

My erratic BP was monitored daily in the months that followed the diagnosis. As such, both my doctors couldn't prescribe a definite dosage for my lifetime medicine.

Her BP would shoot up to abnormal levels. And she's just in her 20s

Every time the company nurse checked on me, I imagined the sphygmomanometer (BP-checking device) was a judge about to deliver my sentence.

Occasionally, my moods depended on the BP reading. I was sprightly with a 120/80, sluggish with 130/90.

Once, it hit the 140/100 mark, which made the normally calm company nurse panic, enough to rush me to the nearest hospital.

I was made to lie down on an ER bed for some 30 minutes. No tests. No operation. Just another BP check, a bit of time to stare at the white ceiling, and a brief chat with the physician. The hospital billed my health insurance for all that, I'm sure.

After the hospital experience, I began seeing humor in my health condition.

As a personal joke, I thought I was in the same league as my superiors, most of whom also had hypertension. I was, after all, always next in line to them during the nurse's BP-check rounds.

Some even compared notes with me, as in, "*Kumusta* BP *mo ngayon?*" "Normal *po*, 120/80." "*Mataas sa akin eh.*" "*Bawang lang po 'yan*, sir."

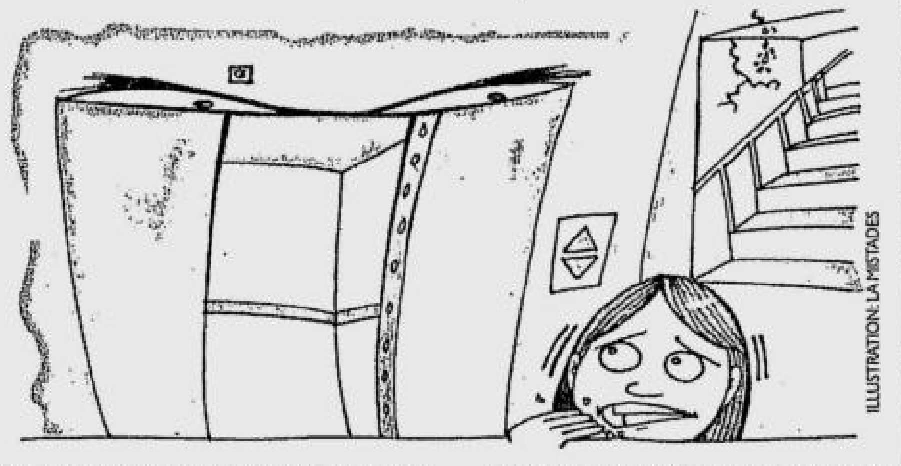


ILLUSTRATION: LA MISTADES

By the way, stashed in my drawer are small bottles of crisp unsalted garlic, known to help lower BP especially when served raw. It's great for sharing, like chips, or simply for sprinkling on soup and meals.

I also carry in my kit a mat of Catapres tablets, taken to control blood pressure, which proved useful when one of the older bosses turned faint with high BP.

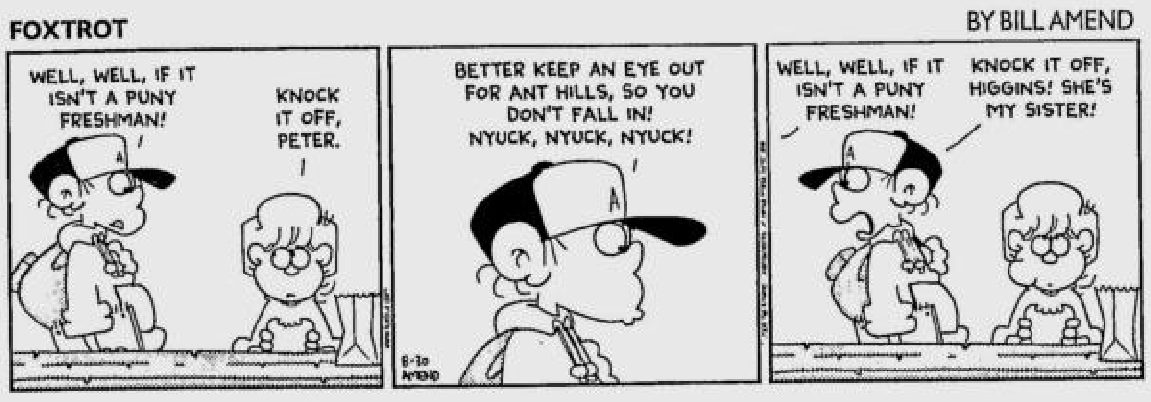
In the past year, I have kept my worrying in check and maintained a self-imposed diet. Although, I guess, next to garlic and drug-dependence, laughter is still the best medicine.

COMIC*Relief*

e-mail feedback at arts@inquirer.com.ph

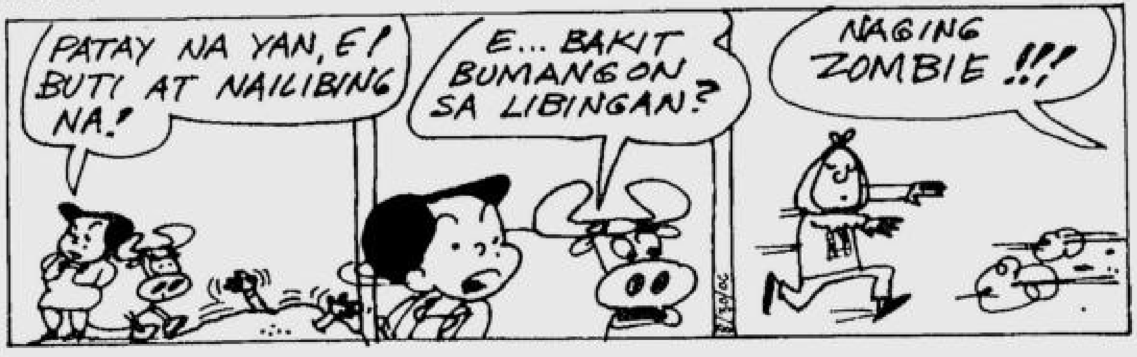
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


WELL, WELL, IF IT ISN'T A PUNY FRESHMAN!
KNOCK IT OFF, PETER.
BETTER KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR ANT HILLS, SO YOU DON'T FALL IN! NYUCK, NYUCK, NYUCK!
8-30 AMEND
WELL, WELL, IF IT ISN'T A PUNY FRESHMAN!
KNOCK IT OFF, HIGGINS! SHE'S MY SISTER!

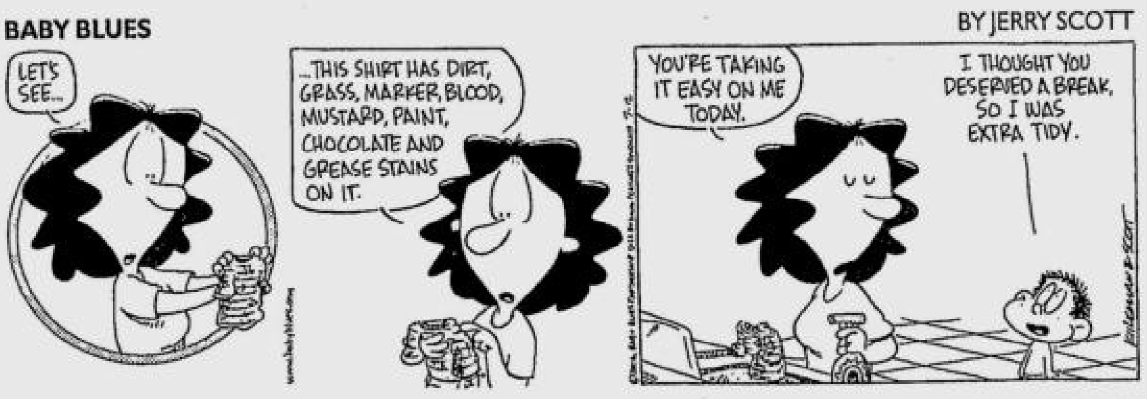
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PATAY NA YAN, E! BUTI AT NAILIBING NA!
E... BAKIT BUMANGON SA LIBINGAN?
NAGING ZOMBIE !!!

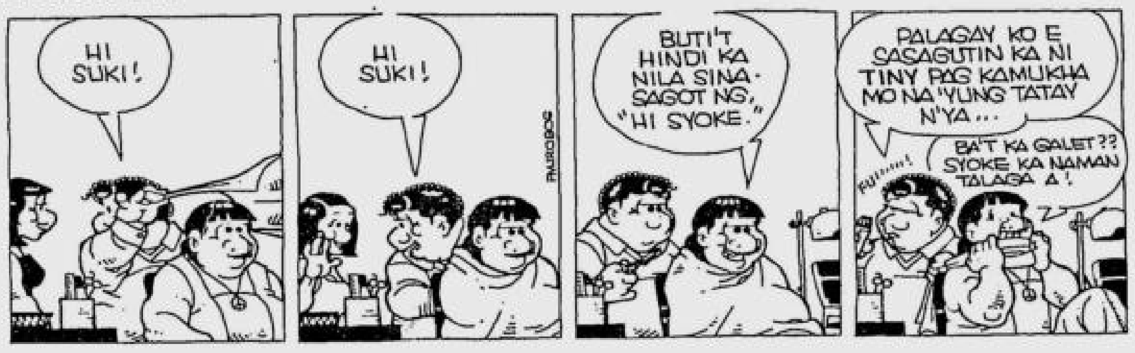
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


LET'S SEE...
...THIS SHIRT HAS DIRT, GRASS, MARKER, BLOOD, MUSTARD, PAINT, CHOCOLATE AND GREASE STAINS ON IT.
YOU'RE TAKING IT EASY ON ME TODAY.
I THOUGHT YOU DESERVED A BREAK, SO I WAS EXTRA TIDY.

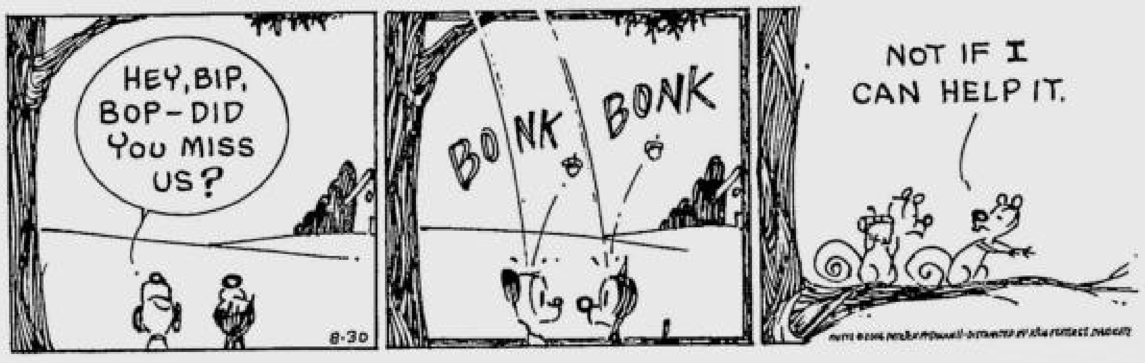
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


HI SUKI!
HI SUKI!
BUTI'T HINDI KA NILA SINASAGOT NG, "HI SYOKE."
PALAGAY KO E SASAGUTIN KA NI TINY PAG KAMUKHA MO NA 'YUNG TATAY N'YA...
BA'T KA GALIT?? SYOKE KA NAMAN TALAGA A!

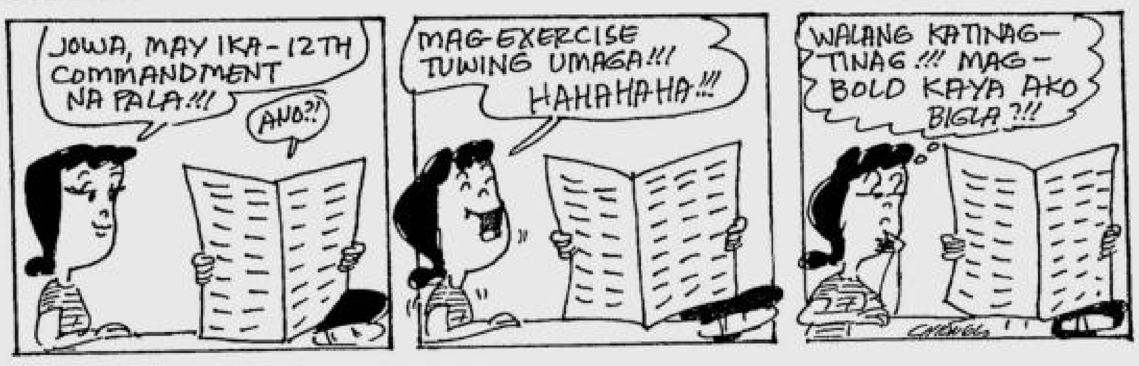
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HEY, BIP, BOP-DID YOU MISS US?
8-30
BONK
BONK
NOT IF I CAN HELP IT.

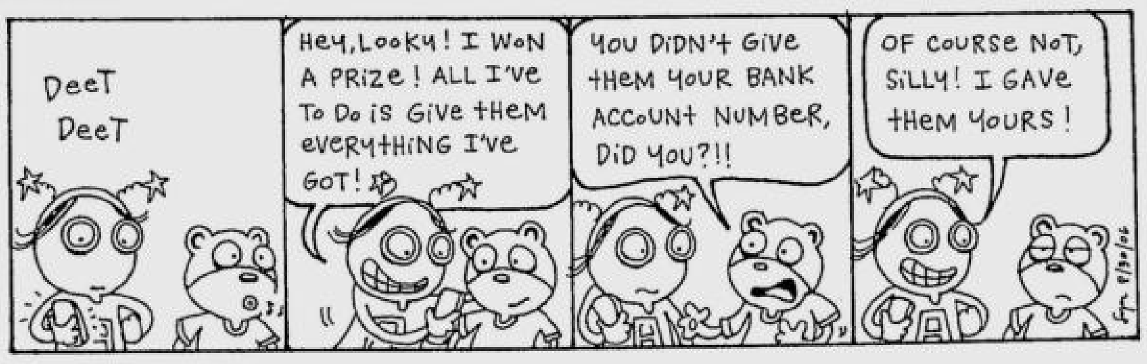
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA, MAY IKA-12TH COMMANDMENT NA PALA!!!
ANO?!
MAG-EXERCISE TUWING UMAGA!!! HAHAHAHA!!!
WALANG KATINAG-TINAG!!! MAG-BOLD KAYA AKO BIGLA?!!

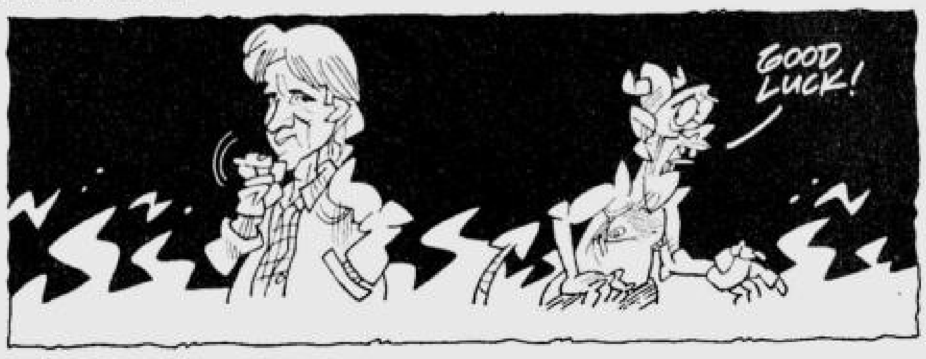
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


DeeT DeeT
Hey, Looky! I WON A PRIZE! ALL I've To Do is Give them everything I've GOT!
You DiDN't Give them your BANK ACCOUNT NUMBER, DiD You?!!
OF course NoT, SiLLY! I GAVe them yours!

DIVINE COMEDY

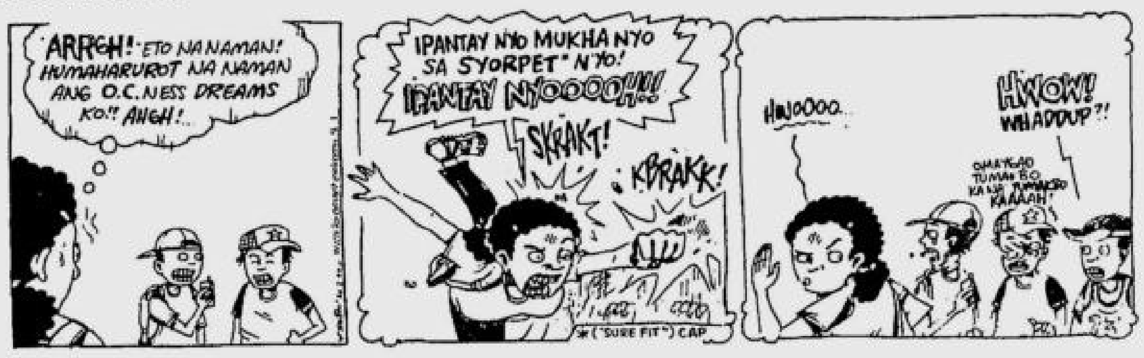
BY STEVEN PABALINAS



NAG-ISIP NG PARAAN SI McGYVER KUNG PAANO SIYA MAKATAKAS SA IMPIYERNO

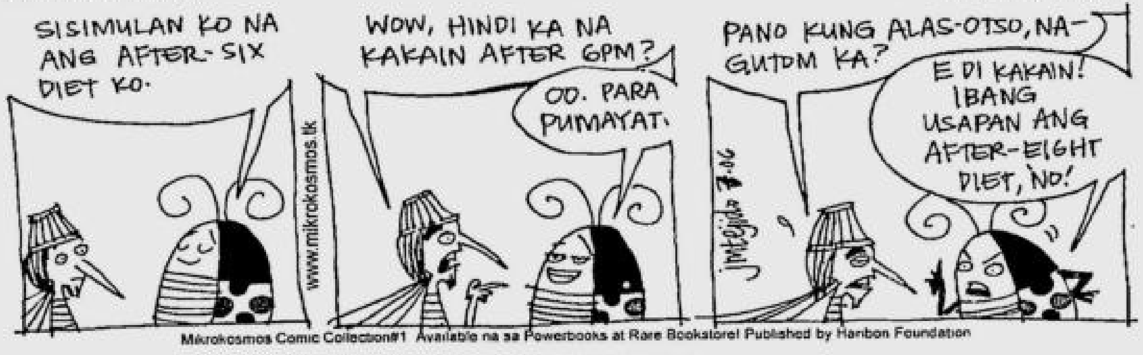
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


ARRGH! ETO NA NAMAN! HUMAHARUROT NA NAMAN ANG O.C.NESS DREAMS KO!! ANGH!..
IPANTAY NYO MUKHA NYO SA SYORPET* NYO! IPANTAY NYOOOOH!!!
SKRAKT!
KBRAKK!
*("SURE FIT") CAP
HWOOOO
HWOW! WHADDUP?!

MIKROKOSMOS

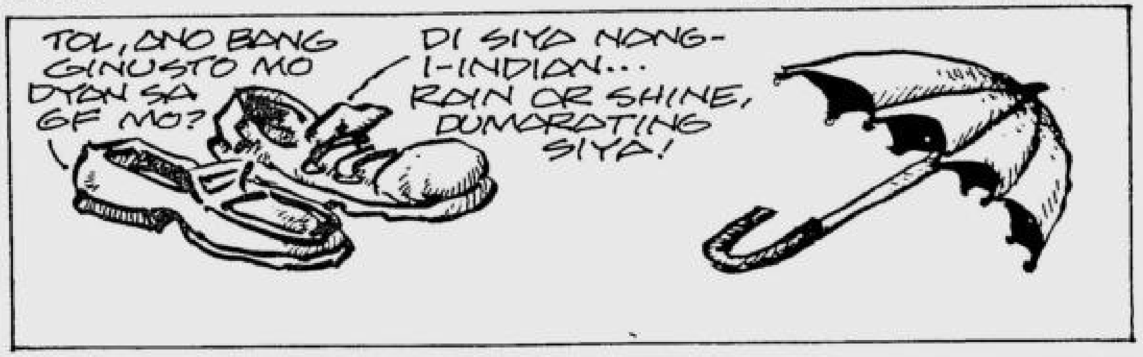
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


SISIMULAN KO NA ANG AFTER-SIX DIET KO.
WOW, HINDI KA NA KAKAIN AFTER 6PM?
OO. PARA PUMAYAT.
www.mikrokosmos.tk
PANO KUNG ALAS-OTSO, NAGUTOM KA?
E DI KAKAIN! IBANG USAPAN ANG AFTER-EIGHT DIET, NO!

Mikrokosmos Comic Collection#1 Available na sa Powerbooks at Rare Bookstore! Published by Hanbon Foundation

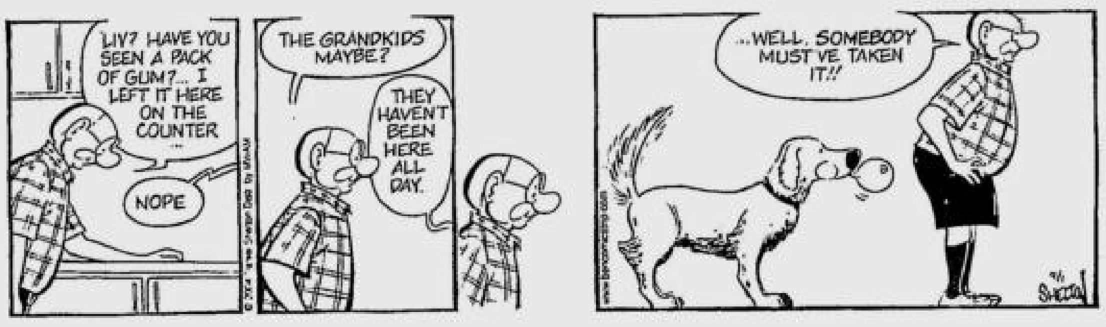
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


TOL, ANO BANG GINUSTO MO DYAN SA GF MO?
DI SIYA NANG-I-INDIAN... RAIN OR SHINE, DUMARATING SIYA!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


LIV? HAVE YOU SEEN A PACK OF GUM?... I LEFT IT HERE ON THE COUNTER ...
NOPE
THE GRANDKIDS MAYBE?
THEY HAVEN'T BEEN HERE ALL DAY.
...WELL, SOMEBODY MUST'VE TAKEN IT!!

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Seethe
5 Con artist's project
9 Where Franco ruled
14 Writer Ambler
15 Mata __
16 Cellist Casals
17 Seaweed extract
18 "Picnic" playwright
19 Map within a map
20 Message on an envelope
23 9-digit ID org.
24 Collar type
25 Actor Penn
26 GI mail drops
27 Tie-breaker periods: abbr.
28 Actress Leoni
31 Betel palm
34 Tavern brew
35 Close securely
36 Message on a postcard
40 Behold: Lat.
41 QB Marino
42 Dated
43 Black or White
44 Shoebox letters
45 Pack away
47 Gloomy aura
49 Detailed design, for short
50 __ de mer
53 Message on a package
56 __ Hawkins Day
57 Tracks to NYC
58 Palo __, CA
59 Sanctify
60 Capital of Samoa
61 British gun
62 Selling point
63 New York baseball team
64 Yarn

DOWN
1 Phobias
2 Yens
3 Sporty Mazda
4 Hosiery hue
5 Japanese religion
6 Pound's poetry
7 Inert gaseous element
8 __ van der Rohe
9 Porcupine's defense
10 Bamboo lover
11 No-shows
12 Robert of "The Sopranos"
13 "To be or __ to be..."
21 Discharge a debt
22 Organic compound
26 Pang
27 Corrida cry
29 I'm all __!
30 Opposite of aweather
31 Bowls over
32 Eastern staple
33 Reckless antics
34 Barley bristle
35 "Pygmalion" playwright
37 "Island of the Blue Dolphins" author
38 Abu Dhabi loc.
39 Historic period
44 Most senior
45 Soul
46 Neon fish
48 Ouzo flavoring
49 Pilfer
50 Valletta's nation
51 Soviet farm
52 Sierra __
53 Painter Frans
54 Jack of oaters
55 Play group
56 Govt. $ support grp.

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	8	■	9	10	11	12	13
14				■	15				■	16				
17				■	18				■	19				
20				21					22					■
23			■	24				■	25				■	■
■	■	■	26				■	27			■	28	29	30
31	32	33			■	■	34			■	35			
36					37	38				39				
40				■	41			■	■	42				
43			■	44			■	45	46			■	■	■
■	■	47	48			■	49				■	50	51	52
■	53					54					55			
56					■	57				■	58			
59					■	60				■	61			
62					■	63				■	64			

By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

8/30/06

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

A	H	E	A	D	■	L	O	B	E	■	C	H	A	P
C	A	R	G	O	■	A	T	O	P	■	O	A	H	U
T	H	R	O	W	I	N	T	H	E	T	O	W	E	L
■	■	■	■	S	A	C	■	R	E	H	E	A	R	S
M	I	C	H	E	N	E	R	■	■	E	D	I	N	A
D	R	E	A	D	S	■	U	R	E	Y	■	I	E	R
T	A	R	N	■	■	S	N	E	E	R	S	■	■	■
■	E	N	O	U	G	H	A	L	R	E	A	D	Y	■
■	■	■	I	N	L	A	W	S	■	■	N	E	A	L
A	R	E	■	T	O	G	A	■	B	E	T	E	L	S
B	O	S	S	A	■	■	Y	A	M	M	E	R	E	D
A	S	P	E	C	T	S	■	L	O	B	■	■	■	■
S	T	R	I	K	E	T	H	E	C	O	L	O	R	S
E	R	I	N	■	C	A	I	N	■	S	Y	R	I	A
D	A	T	E	■	H	Y	P	E	■	S	E	E	D	Y

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8/30/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're hardworking, organized and reliable. People want to have you on their team. Not only are you extremely capable, you have good money sense as well. Without a doubt, your confidence and poise inspire respect from others. In your early 20s, you become bolder and more intense about everything in life. This year is full of exciting, fresh new beginnings!

Birthdate of: Cameron Diaz, actress; Michael Michele, actress; Lisa Ling, TV personality.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Don't throw your weight around at work, even if someone is treating you unfairly or rudely. You'll only make matters worse. Back away from this fight.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Parents must be patient with children today. It's very easy to overpower somebody suddenly, just because you can. Avoid power struggles in sports as well. (Not good!)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Family quarrels and squabbles are likely to arise today. Avoid these if you can. Each party wants his or her own way. It's a contest of wills. Keep clear of this.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Arguments and disagreements about practically anything can arise today. That's because power struggles are practically inevitable. Be careful. This is an accident-prone day

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Be careful when shopping today. You might be almost obsessed about getting something. You're like a dog with a bone. Similarly, you might be obsessed about making money. Either way lacks balance.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Your determination to make improvements in your surroundings or to improve somebody in your family dynamic might be a good thing. But do others agree?

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Guard against crime or secret, behind-the-scenes activities. Keep your nose clean. Don't do anything underhanded or anything you wouldn't want printed in this paper

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Don't try to coerce a friend into agreeing with you. And don't let others try to coerce you into agreeing with them. It's all just too pushy.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your ambition is definitely aroused. However, is something worth achieving if you have to be ruthless to get it? Who are you at the end of this process? (You and your personal integrity come first.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Don't try to proselytize your political or religious beliefs today. You might be enthusiastic about them, but others will turn a deaf ear.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You feel extremely territorial about what you own and what you share with someone else. In fact, you might even feel jealous.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Strong differences of opinions with partners and close friends are likely today. Why not be gracious and step aside from all this silliness? It will be history in a few days.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

				5	8	1		
	3						2	
4		8				7		
2				8				
8			9	4	5			2
				1				8
		6				3		4
	7						5	
		5	7	9				

Difficulty Level ★★★

8/30

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	4	1	3	5	6	7	8	2
6	7	8	2	4	1	3	9	5
2	3	5	8	7	9	6	1	4
3	5	4	9	8	2	1	6	7
8	2	7	1	6	4	9	5	3
1	6	9	7	3	5	2	4	8
4	1	2	5	9	7	8	3	6
5	9	3	6	2	8	4	7	1
7	8	6	4	1	3	5	2	9

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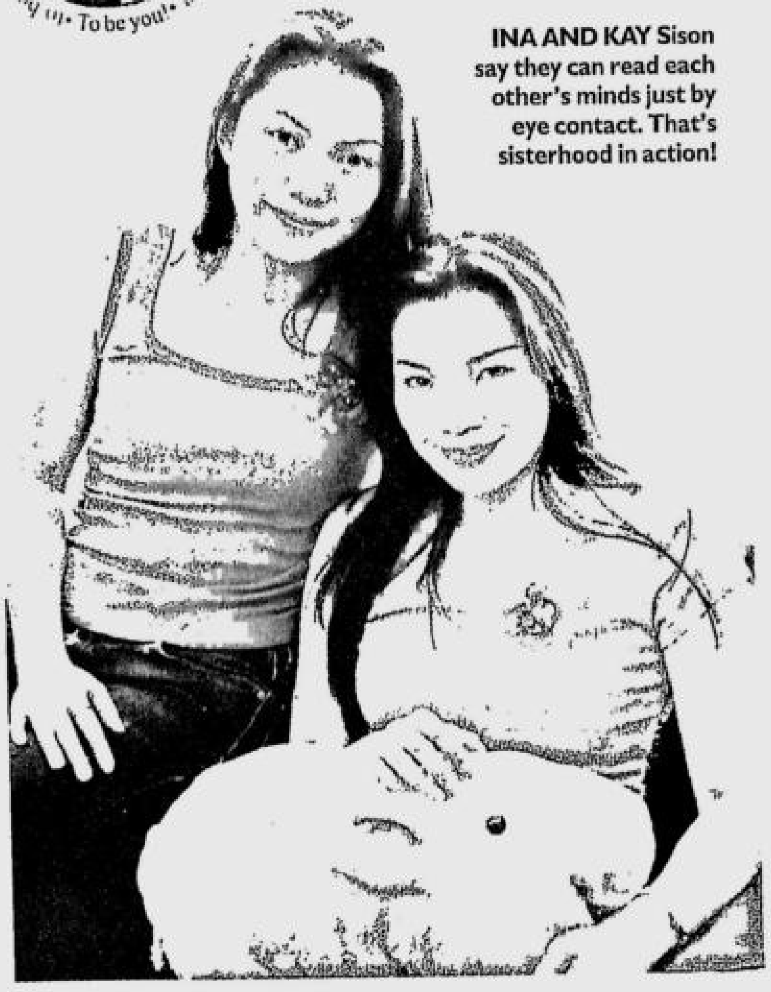

INA AND KAY Sison say they can read each other's minds just by eye contact. That's sisterhood in action!

Celebrating sisterhood

Veet and Clearasil offer beauty products that are essential to young girls' lives

By Zee Castro
2bU! Contributor

TO CELEBRATE SISTER'S DAY, VEET and Clearasil recently hosted a bonding event at Oakwood Premiere.

Over giggles and yummy desserts, best friends and real sister tandems shared their insights on the joys of sisterly friendship. Whether it be sobbing over matters of the heart, reminiscing about past experiences or providing much needed comic relief through thick and thin, a sister will always be there to share precious moments with.

Like a true-blue sister, Veet and Clearasil celebrates sisterhood with beauty products essential to young girls' lives.

The Clearasil Daily Wash has deep cleansing and antibacterial properties, is skin pH neutral, soap-free, and contains skin conditioners that prevent skin from drying.

The Clearasil 3-in-1 Deep Cleansing Wash has a microbead formula that unclogs pores and cleans away dirt, oil and impurities. It leaves skin feeling smooth and clean right after washing.

The Clearasil Ice Wash, meanwhile, gives a cool and tingling sensation and leaves skin refreshed, while the Clearasil Overnight Defense Gel works to revitalize skin while you sleep.

The world leader in hair removal, Veet has come up with an assortment of products fit for every girl's different needs and lifestyles.

The Veet Hair Removal Mousse is ideal for girls on the go. It works in about 8 minutes, and comes in two variants: Veet Mousse with moisturizing aloe and Veet Mousse with softening Silk extracts.

For girls who have dry or sensitive skin, Veet Cream Sensitive Plus is the answer. The Veet Hair Removal Cream dissolves unwanted hair in just 5-10 minutes and, unlike shaving, the new hair that grows out is thinner, making skin feel smoother in the process.

For those who opt for waxing, Veet Wax Strips is the best alternative. It's ready to use, doesn't require heating, and is even effective on short hair. As a bonus, Perfect Finish Wipes come with the strips, to leave your skin feeling soft and moisturized.

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ALTHOUGH Cheska lives in Subic, she and cousin Mike have made a pact to stay as close as they can be.

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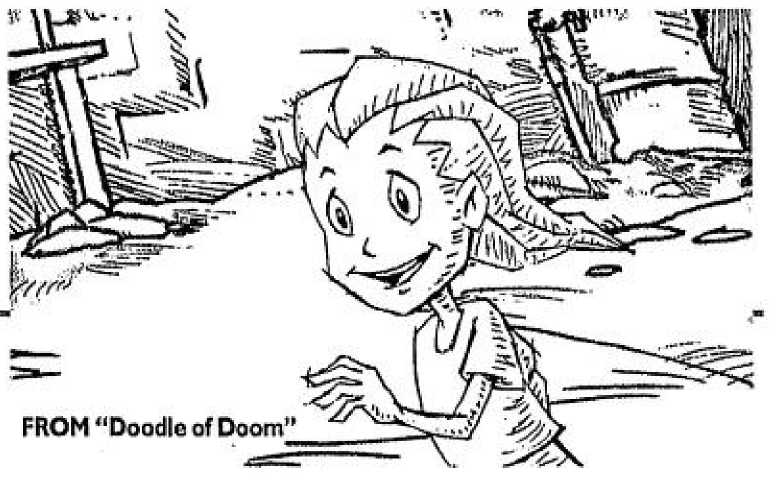
RP entry to int'l animation tilt



FROM "Doodle of Doom"

By Marinel R. Cruz

INQUIRER COMICS STRIP CONtributor Blog Caliguia's short animation film "Doodle of Doom" is the Philippine representative to the prestigious Nickelodeon's Nicktoons Network Animation Festival.

PDI contributor and buddy, both art students, compete with established pros

Caliguia and partner Jason Confesor are competing with 30 other finalists from countries like France, Canada, Germany, England and the United States to win a cash prize of $10,000.

According to its website, www.nicktoonsnetwork.com, the festival was launched in 2004. Its aim: "To showcase the diversity of worldwide animation filmmaking."

Animators from around the world were asked to submit entries until May 31. "Doodle of Doom" and Yeo Lee Nah's "Crocodile Journals" (Singapore) are the only two entries from Asia. Korean finalist Dong Jun-heo, whose film is titled "Egg Song," is based in the United States.

Judging this year's competition are Hollywood comedians Shawn and Marlon Wayans ("Little Man," "White Chicks" and the new animated special "Thugaboo"), Seth MacFarlane (creator of "Family Guy"), Andreas Deja ("Who Framed Roger Rabbit," "The Little Mermaid," "Aladdin" and "Lilo & Stitch"), independent animator Bill Plympton ("The Tune," "Microtoons," "Boomtown" and "Plymptoons"), and last year's Producers Choice and Student Award Winner, JG Quintel.

All six judges screened the submitted films during the festival held in Los Angeles, California, on Aug. 12 and 13, and rated them based on "story, animation, design, entertainment value and fun factor." Winners will be announced tomorrow.

Other prizes at stake are the Producer's

RP ENTRY/ F2

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RP entry to int'l…

From page F1

Choice Award, Student Award, Diversity Award and Viewer's Choice Award.

Already a winner

Nelson "Blog" Caliguia Jr., 21, is a multimedia arts student at the College of St. Benilde. He is the creator of "Inday Wanda," which comes out weekly in the INQUIRER's Comics section. Confesor is his classmate.

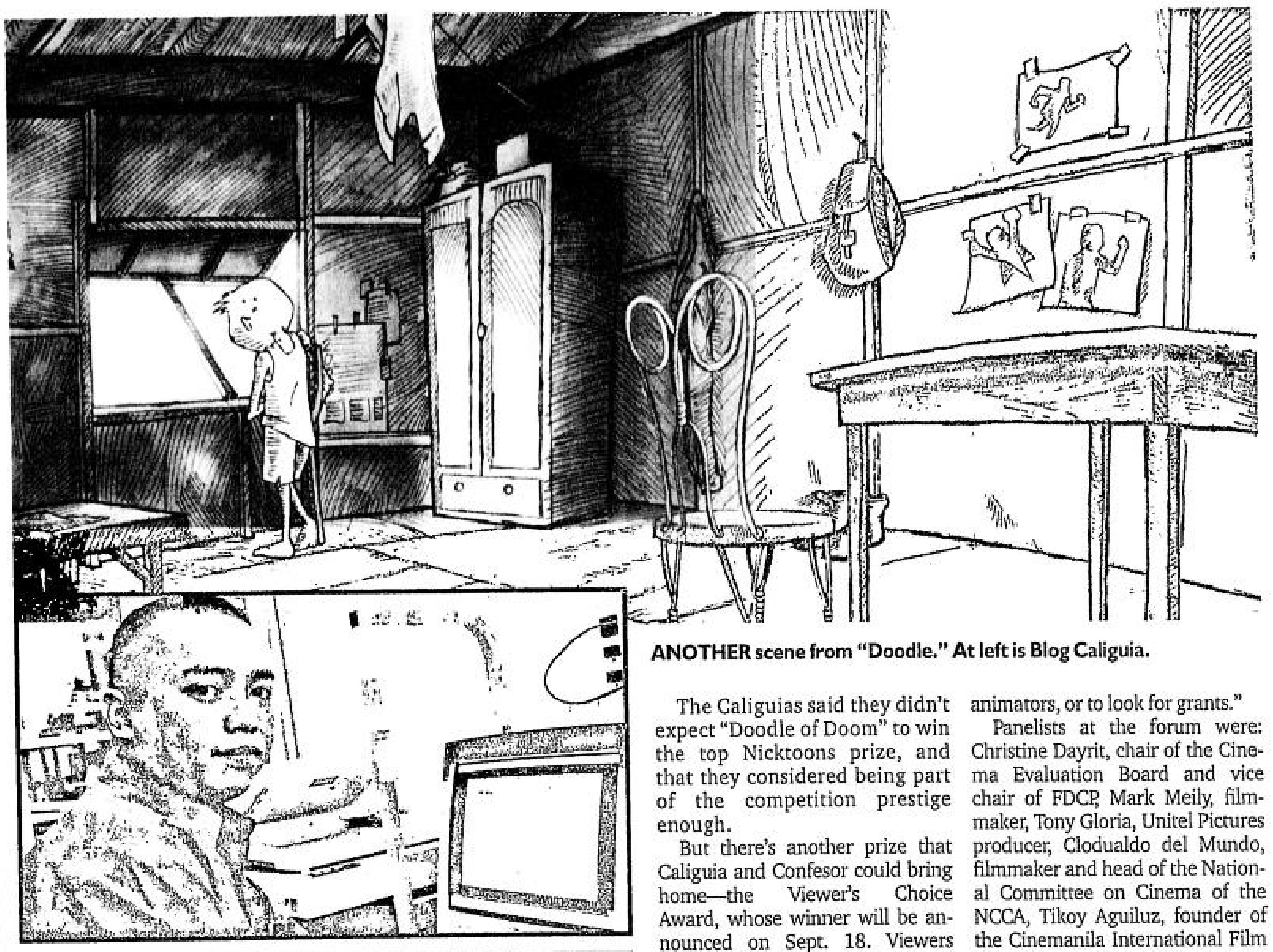
Caliguia said "Doodle of Doom" was initially made as an entry to two local contests—the 4th Animazing Shorts competition and The Graphic Expo. It won the grand prize (amateur level) in both contests.

"It was just a school project," Caliguia told INQUIRER Entertainment on Saturday. "Our instructors exempted us from other school work just so we could concentrate on it. They said it had been four years since the school won any animation award over Ateneo."

When Caliguia's mom, Mina, first told him about the Nickelodeon contest, the young artist was hesitant. "It's an international contest. We really didn't think our work stood a chance," he pointed out.

He added that the other finalists are already professionals—art directors and animation directors in their respective countries.

"*Milya-milya ang layo namin sa mga kalaban* (We were miles behind)," said Mina, who is the managing director of Artfarm Asia Animation, an RP-based animation training and service provider. "I think Blog and Jason's work was chosen because it's a novelty. It really looks like something from a Third World country. Seeing people living in shanties maybe common to us Filipinos, but not to Westerners. Most of the other entries are comedy films."



ANOTHER scene from "Doodle." At left is Blog Caliguia.

The Caliguias said they didn't expect "Doodle of Doom" to win the top Nicktoons prize, and that they considered being part of the competition prestige enough.

But there's another prize that Caliguia and Confesor could bring home—the Viewer's Choice Award, whose winner will be announced on Sept. 18. Viewers could vote online until Sept. 15. The finalists are already being aired on Nickelodeon.

Animation forum

Meanwhile, Artfarm Asia hosted an animation forum held last week with Pixar Animation Studio's Ronnie del Carmen as main speaker.

Del Carmen, a Filipino, worked on the hit animation film "Finding Nemo" as head of story. Prior to joining Pixar, he worked at Dreamworks and Warner Bros.

Reported Mina: "What we got out of the forum was a commitment from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and the Film Development Council (FDCP) to come up with something written and tangible for the animation industry. This will either be to set up an agency for local animators, or to look for grants."

Panelists at the forum were: Christine Dayrit, chair of the Cinema Evaluation Board and vice chair of FDCP, Mark Meily, filmmaker, Tony Gloria, Unitel Pictures producer, Clodualdo del Mundo, filmmaker and head of the National Committee on Cinema of the NCCA, Tikoy Aguiluz, founder of the Cinemanila International Film Festival, Cecille Alvarez, NCCA chair and Rod Cornejo, GMA Network's communications relation officer.

"It's good that we're now discussing the state of the animation industry here," said Mina. "Even (Hollywood production firm) Bigfoot Entertainment has announced that it has a film fund that can be made available to local filmmakers. This could also [benefit] the animation industry. Not all films are shot live; there could be opportunities for animators, too."

Bigfoot recently announced it was willing to finance or co-produce a movie "with a Filipino concept and an English script" for as much as $1-2 million. The Cebu-based Hollywood production company is working with the FDCP on this project.

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	4 THE LOST CITY	5 STAY ALIVE	6 YOU ARE THE ONE	7 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
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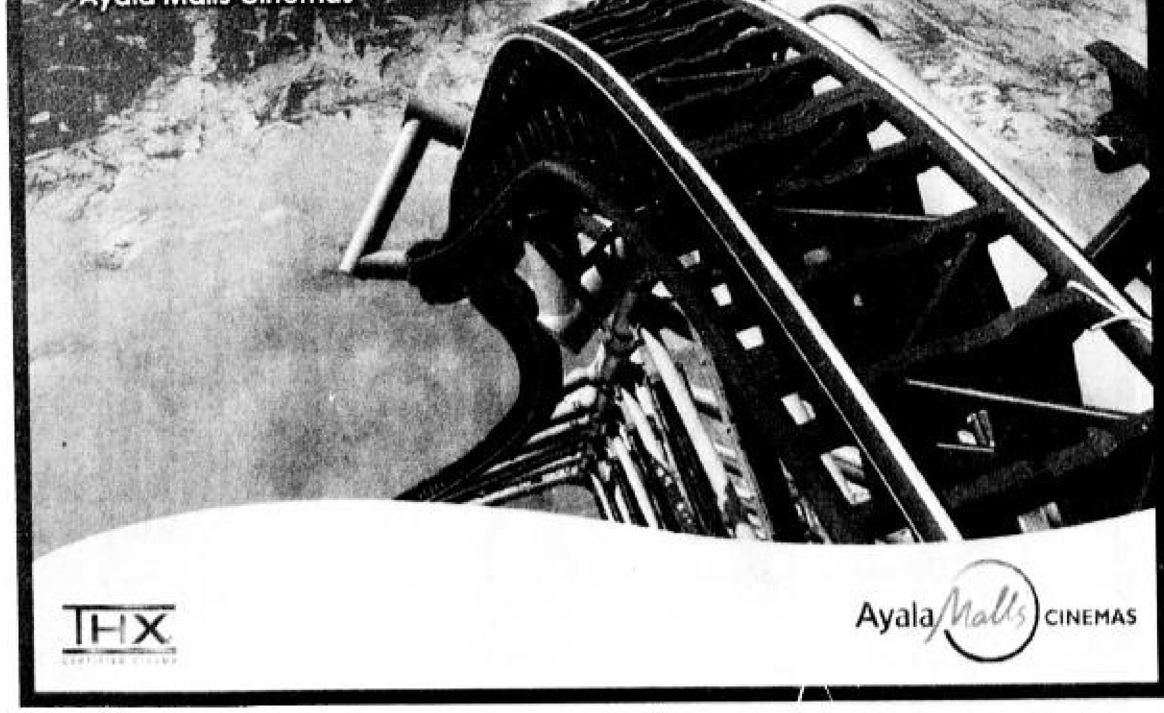

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OPENING TODAY

You Are the One

Stars Toni Gonzaga, Sam Milby, Rio Locsin, Eugene Domingo
Directed by Cathy Garcia-Molina
Director Molina apprenticed on the TV drama "Maalaala Mo Kaya" and, under award-winning filmmaker Olivia Lamasan, cut her teeth in Star Cinema romantic-comedies like "Bcuz of U" and "Close to You." Her latest is this much-ballyhooed first team-up of Gonzaga and Milby. As expected, drumbeaters are banking on the perceived screen chemistry between the two leads who play star-crossed lovers—a snobbish Am-Boy and a feisty Tondo girl. A lot of ink has been spilled on the "blooming romance," but not much on the film's aesthetic value. For what it's worth, Molina won a KBP Golden Dove Best Director award for her work on "MMK" this year.

Jupit

Stars Ate Gay, Tim Espinosa
Directed by Alvin Reyes Fortuno
The title, according to its lead star, Nora Aunor impersonator and stand-up comic Ate Gay, is swardspeak for *gupit* or haircut. "That's because I play a hairstylist in a salon," he explains. The object of his affection is Fil-Am newcomer Tim Espinosa, a member of the dance group Freemale Dancers. Bandera columnist Jobert Sucaldito quotes award-winning screenwriter Ricky Lee, who raves about the gay film: "The storytelling is clear. The characterization of gays is also very human. It's funny. I enjoyed it." Asked if he has a love scene with Espinosa, Ate Gay gasps with mock disappointment: "None! The movie's wholesome." Exclusively at SM Digital Cinemas.

The Devil Wears Prada

Stars Meryl Streep, Anne Hathaway, Emily Blunt, Adrian Grenier
Directed by David Frankel

Based on Lauren Weisberger's best-selling *roman à clef* of the same title, this glossy, classy romp chronicles the dysfunctional relationship between a despotic fashion mag editor (Streep) and her unfortunate flunky (Hathaway). J. Hoberman of Village Voice thinks "Streep is the scariest, most nuanced, funniest movie villainess since Tilda Swinton's nazified White Witch … a tour de force." David Ansen of Newsweek also loves Streep (she's "scarily sensational" and "malicious fun") but dismisses the film as "dramatically anorexic." Eleanor Ringel-Gillespie of The Atlanta Journal-Constitution disagrees: "The most scrumptious comedy of the year … killer cast, killer clothes, killer laughs … a tale of sex, lies and bulimia."

Stay Alive

Stars Jon Foster, Samaire Armstrong, Frankie Muniz, Jimmi Simpson
Directed by William Brent Bell
After playing a bootleg copy of a new horror survival game inspired by a 17th century serial killer called "The Blood Countess" gamers (or video-game addicts) end up dead—in the same grisly manner they had perished in the digital world. Kirk Honeycutt of The Hollywood Reporter asserts, "The imaginative concept works … but the characters are stock. [It's] a passable thriller for the young crowd." John Anderson of Variety affirms: "An anemic attempt to update the genre … Its attraction is strictly the novelty of possessed video games. Production values are good, save for a brief sequence of hand-held camera work which would literally have audiences, were they airborne, reaching for the small paper bag."

The Lost City

Stars Andy Garcia, Dustin Hoffman, Bill Murray, Ines Sastre
Directed by Andy Garcia
Set in "sensual, glamorous and decadent" Havana circa 1958, on the eve of the fall of the Batista regime, this "loving Valentine to Cuba" unravels the moral dilemmas of a nightclub owner who's "trying to stay neutral" in spite of the combustible political climate. Rex Reed of the New York Observer points out that it's "sincerely conceived and beautifully photographed in lush tropical colors that intoxicate … [but] it's too long, politically confusing and painfully self-indulgent." Michael Wilmington of the Chicago Tribune comments that it's "throbbing with music, seething with anger and romance … [it] breaks your heart, bewilders, alienates and ravishes you by turns … [but it's] highly artificial and very movie-conscious." Exclusively at Glorietta 4 and Greenbelt 3.

Hopefully, not Bamboo clones

From page F6

zon (Urdaneta Pangasinan, Oct. 13) and again Manila on Oct. 14.

The winner for each leg gets P10,000. The regional winners then compete for the grand prize of P450,000 plus a one-year recording contract.

A drawback to this type of competition is that it might encourage the aspirants to become Bamboo clones. The early part of last Saturday's proceedings almost turned into an impersonation contest, with some contestants earnestly aping Bamboo's rabble-rousing moves onstage—to disastrous results. For instance, finalist No. 1 Paul Santic put too much emphasis on angry rap-metal posturing and forgot to project his vocals.

Visually engaging

But others displayed individuality with authentic talent. Niño Familiano and Lambert Reyes played electric guitar while rendering fairly impressive versions of Bamboo's "F.U." and "Noypi." Lone woman challenger Sheena Reyes spiced up her cover of "Noypi" with a visually engaging metal-chick persona.

A flamboyant 19-year-old by the name of Lester Lapuz captured the most attention and was eventually proclaimed winner. Backed by his band called Long-Stemmed Bonsai and dragging on a cigarette, Lapuz acted like a real rock star who knew how to sing, too. He ignored the tendency to mimic Bamboo and, instead, punctuated verses with his own personal touch. This was also very much evident in his cover of "Fever Dog" by the fictitious band Still Water from the film "Almost Famous."

Around midnight, the four members of Bamboo climbed onstage and unleashed an hour-long performance whose power left one's head abuzz. Bamboo himself was all fired up—intense, punching and kicking the air as the band rolled on the groove nonstop.

Interestingly, Bamboo Mañalac came from a group, Rivermaya, that was, in effect, the product of a search in the 1990s. When the band had its first public performance at the defunct Faces disco, Bamboo wasn't even the vocalist; he was just a friend of the bass player, Nathan Azarcon. Even so, he would go on to replace the Rick Springfield-type front man and sing many of Rivermaya's pop-inflected hits.

Rock icon

When Bamboo returned to the Philippines after leaving the band to go to the United States, he had transformed from a pop star into a real rock icon.

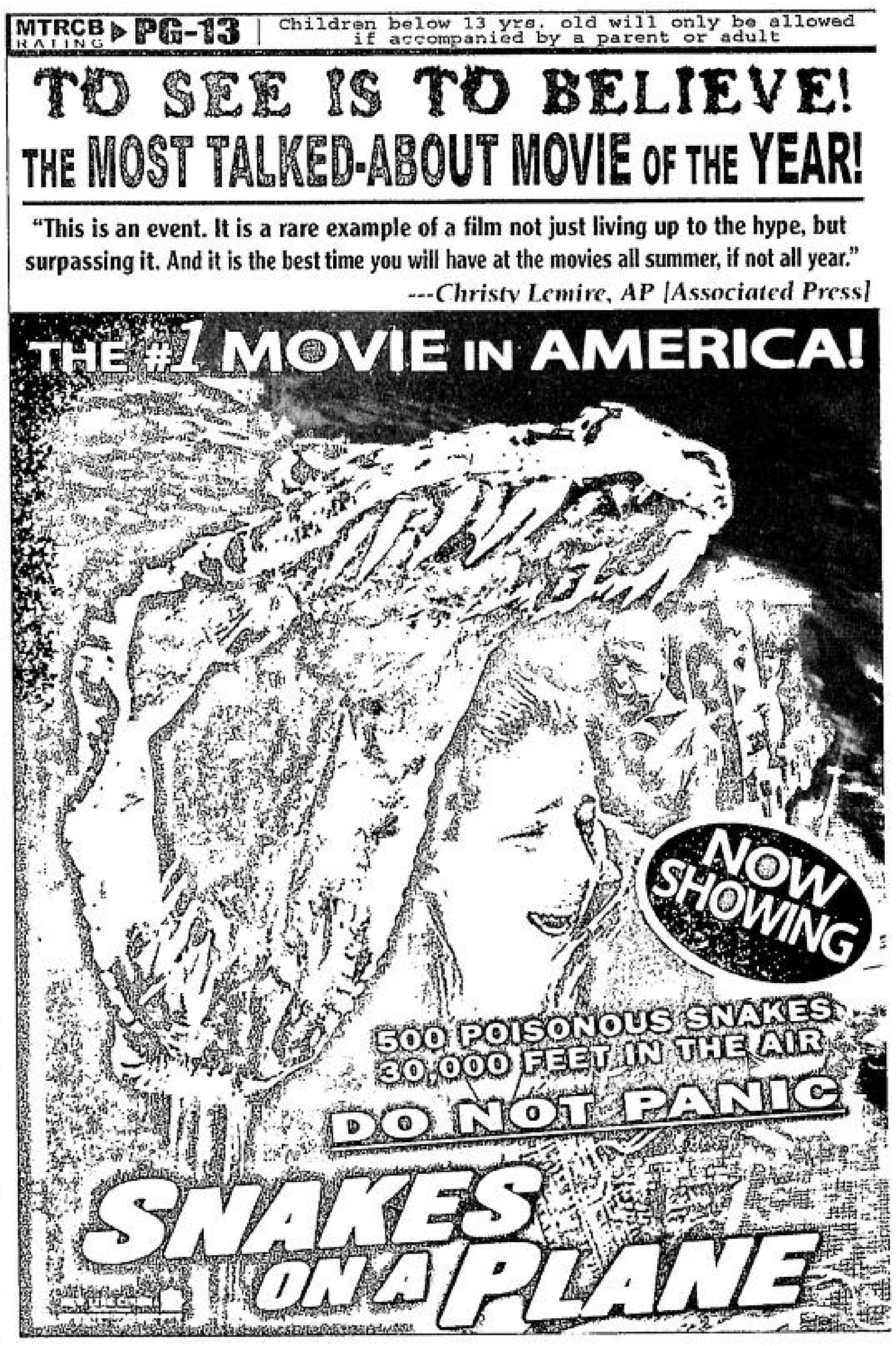
On Saturday, the songs and sound of Bamboo was not only good for a sing-along, but bordered on provoking frenzy and, in the case of today's punks, wild dancing like it was 1977 all over again.

That's why it was wrong for Azarcon (who now forms part of Bamboo's nucleus) to admonish the crowd as he did with, "*Makinig naman kayo, puro kayo* slam (dancing)…"

The kids couldn't be blamed for channeling their energies into each other. Most of them couldn't afford even bottled water, much less beer.

BAMBOO all night long

ROMY HOMILLADA



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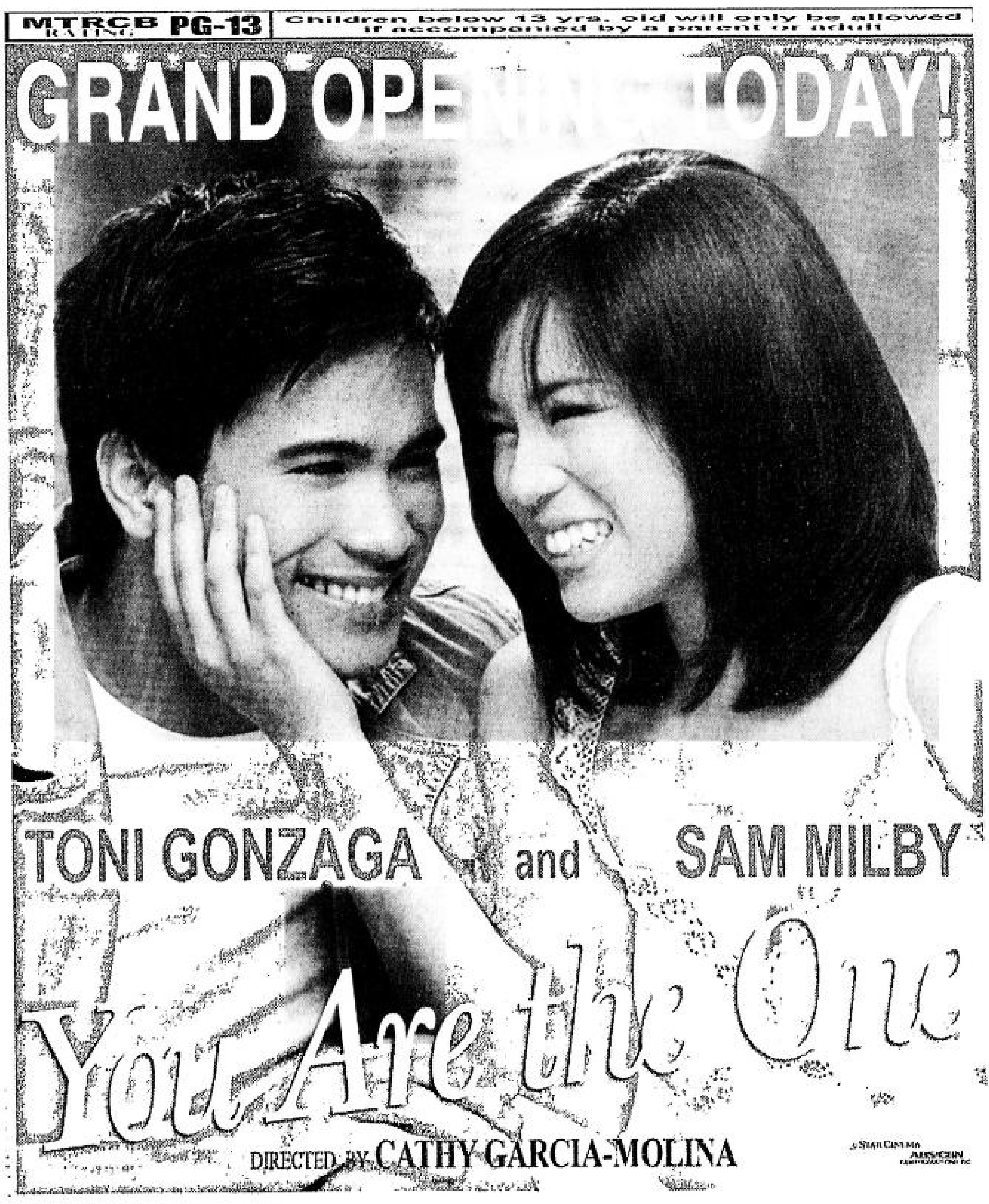

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4 SNAKES ON A PLANE
PREMIERE
MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 LITTLE MAN
2 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
3 YOUR AR THE ONE
4 SNAKES ON A PLANE

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 YOUR AR THE ONE
4 SNAKES ON A PLANE
5 MORTUARY

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433994
1 YOUR AR THE ONE
2 SNAKES ON A PLANE
3 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
4 STORMBREAKER

THEATRES
[illegible]
1 YOUR AR THE ONE
2 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
3 THE BREAK UP

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271
1 YOUR AR THE ONE
2
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 STAY ALIVE
2 SNAKES ON A PLANE
3 CLICK
4 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
5 YOUR AR THE ONE
6 LITTLE MAN
7 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
8 YOUR AR THE ONE
9 MORTUARY
10 SUKOB

Blue Wave MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
3 PLEASE CALL
4 RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
2 STAY ALIVE
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 SNAKES ON A PLANE
5 RESERVED

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
3 PLEASE CALL
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 SNAKES ON A PLANE
3 CLICK

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4440346)
1 MIAMI VICE
2

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 STORMBREAKER
3 TAMARA
4 AMERICAN HAUNTING

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 CLICK
2 LADY IN THE WATER

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
1 LITTLE MAN
2 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 AMERICAN HAUNTING
2 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 AMERICAN HAUNTING
4 S. P. L.

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 JUST MY LUCK
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 SEE NO EVIL

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
3 OH MY GHOST
4 BREAK UP

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 LITTLE MAN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 OH MY GHOST

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
2 PLEASE CALL

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 STORMBREAKER
2 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
3 PLEASE CALL
4 PLEASE CALL

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 AMERICAN HAUNTING
2 SEX EDUCATION
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
5 S. P. L.

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 WILD ORCHIDS-2
3 JUST MY LUCK
4 PLEASE CALL

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 PLEASE CALL
2 PLEASE CALL

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
MTRCB PG-13
12.00, 2.30, 5.00, 7:30, 10:00

2 LITTLE MAN
MTRCB R-13 12:40, 5.20, 10.00
CLICK
MTRCB PG 13 3.00 7.40

3 YOU ARE THE ONE
Subject for MTRCB Rating

4 SNAKES ON A PLANE
MTRCB PG-13

PREMIERE THEATRE
MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
MTRCB R-13
12.40, 3.00, 5.20, 7.40, 10.00

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

Catch the Cineplex Special

MONDAY AND TUESDAY SPECIALS
(EXCEPT FOR DEVIL WEARS PRADA AND MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND)
On Mondays and Tuesdays, starting August 14, enjoy special prices of P99 for Cinemas 1-4, P120 for the Premiere Theatre (exclusive of food and drinks). Not applicable to selected movies, on holidays, and in conjunction with other Shang Cineplex discounts and promos.
Specials last until Nov. 14, 2006. See posters and flyers for details.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3 0608 Series of 2006

Call 633-7851, loc. 171 or 633-2227 for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza

MTRCB RATING R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE

Uma Thurman Luke Wilson

My Super Ex-Girlfriend

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Featuring:
Orange and Lemons • Barbie Almalbis • Itchyworms • Moonstar • Imago • Boldstar • Kamikazee • Parokya ni Edgar • Sandwich • The Sound Drip • Shamrock • Top Suzara • Sponge Cola • Rocksteddy
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Eastwood Central Plaza
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the bloomfields
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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City

1 LITTLE MAN
1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00
R-13

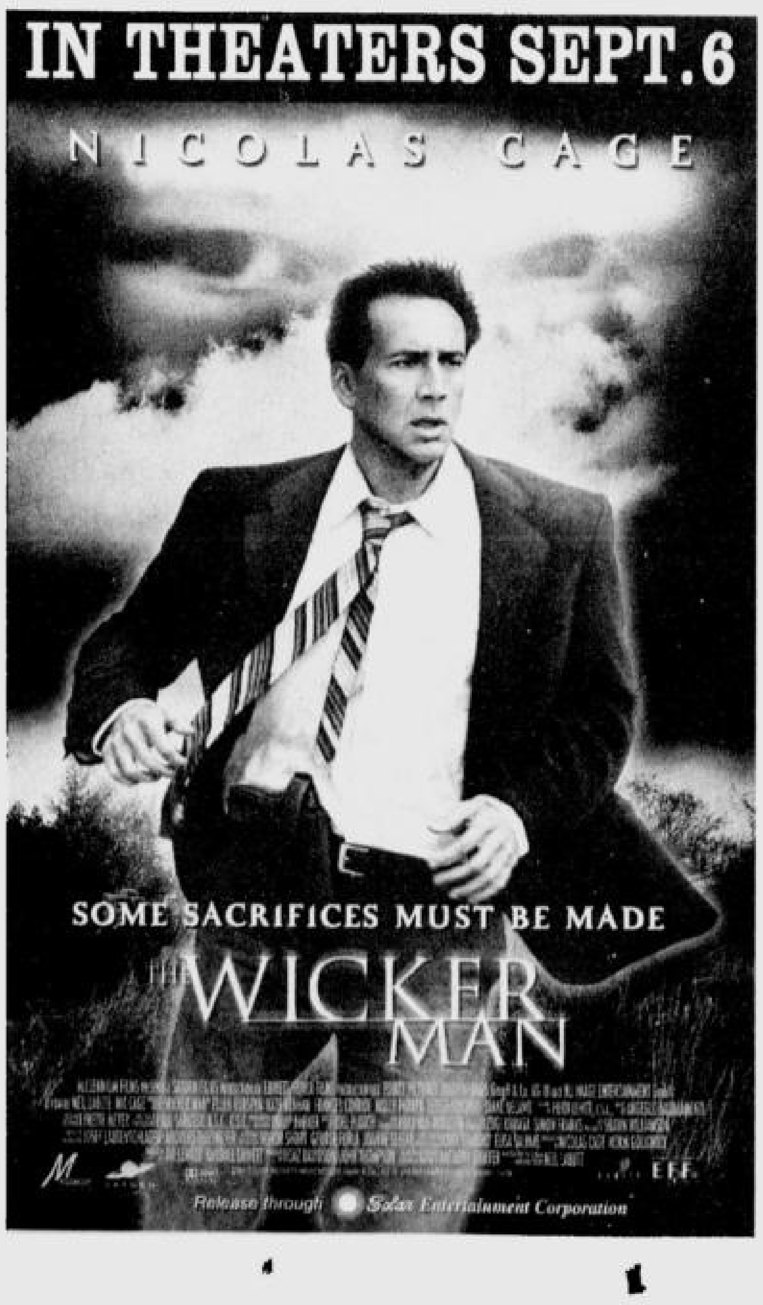
2 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00
PG-13

3 YOU ARE THE ONE

4 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00
R-13

For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

IN THEATERS SEPT.6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Gateway CiNEPLEX*10
FULL STADIUM SEATING

THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
1:45 / 4:20 / 6:55 / 9:30
STAY ALIVE
12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30
YOU ARE THE ONE
LITTLE MAN
1:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40
CLICK
2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30
MY SUPER X-GIRLFRIEND
1:30 / 3:30 / 5:30 / 7:30 / 9:30
SNAKES ON A PLANE
1:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
GATEWAY PLATINUM CINEMA
THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
1:10 / 3:45 / 6:20 / 8:55

Ali MALL 5

YOU ARE THE ONE
SUKOB
2:20 / 2:20 / 4:20 / 6:20 / 8:20
LITTLE MAN
11:55 / 2:05 / 4:15 / 6:25 / 8:35
SNAKES ON A PLANE
11:55 / 2:05 / 4:15 / 6:25 / 8:35
MY SUPER X-GIRLFRIEND
12:30 / 2:30 / 4:30 / 6:30 / 8:30
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

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BATISTA
LIVE AT ARANETA CENTER
SEPT 8 • 4:00 PM MOTORCADE AROUND THE CENTER
4:30 PM ALI MALL
SEPT 9 • 1:30 PM FARMERS PLAZA
3:00 PM GATEWAY MALL

MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.

Meryl STREEP
Anne HATHAWAY
THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
The job to die for comes with a killer boss.

FOX 2000 PICTURES PRESENTS A WENDY FINERMAN PRODUCTION MERYL STREEP ANNE HATHAWAY "THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA" STANLEY TUCCI SIMON BAKER EMILY BLUNT ADRIAN GRENIER [illegible] JULIA MICHELS [illegible] THEODORE SHAPIRO [illegible] MARK LIVOLSI A.C.E. [illegible] JESS GONCHOR [illegible] FLORIAN BALLHAUS [illegible] KAREN ROSENFELT JOE CARACCIOLO JR [illegible] WENDY FINERMAN [illegible] LAUREN WEISBERGER [illegible] ALINE BROSH McKENNA [illegible] DAVID FRANKEL

this year it's hell on heels

GRAND OPENING TODAY

OVERHEARD THIS WEEK

From Emmy Awards

JEREMY Piven with mom Joyce AP

HEARD at the 58th annual Primetime Emmy Awards:

"I'm the only straight man to bring his mother two years in a row." — "Entourage" actor and Best Supporting Actor (Comedy) winner Jeremy Piven.

***

CONAN O'Brien AP

"Alec Baldwin has a new show on NBC, James Woods has a new show on CBS and Mel Gibson has a new show on Al-Jazeera." — Host Conan O'Brien during the opening monologue.

***

BLYTHE Danner AP

"I guess I have to thank Showtime even though they have canceled us." — Blythe Danner, Best Supporting Actress (Drama) for "Huff."

***

MEGAN Mullally AP

"We had eight great years of happy employment and that's more than most people can ever hope for." — "Will & Grace" star Megan Mullally, Best Supporting Actress (Comedy).

***

DEBRA Messing AP

"I'm strangely upset." — Debra Messing about the end of "Will & Grace."

***

"There is nothing I would rather do than watch this person." — Warren Beatty about his wife, Annette Bening.

***

"The Bush administration just keeps sticking it to the working man." — Conan O'Brien, on the IRS taxing show gift baskets.

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FREE MOVIE

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Our way of thanking you for sharing your life with us.

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See Flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2440 Series of 2006.

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SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0104

IMAX

EVEREST IN FULL IMAX 3D
11:30AM Admission Price- P150
ANT BULLY IN FULL IMAX 3D
1:00PM 3:00PM 5:00PM 7:00PM
P250 -Matinee (Mon- Thurs)
P300 -After 5 pm (Mon- Thurs)
P300 -All screenings (Fri- Sun)
SUPERMAN RETURNS
9:00PM Admission Price- P350

1 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
2 STAY ALIVE
3 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
4 LITTLE MAN
5 JUPIT
6 SNAKE ON A PLANE

PREMIERE CINEMA
YOU ARE THE ONE

DIRECTOR'S CLUB
DEVIL WEARS PRADA

THE PODIUM

CINEMA 1
DEVIL WEARS PRADA
CINEMA 2
LITTLE MAN
633-8976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452

1 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 SNAKE ON A PLANE
5 SUKOB
6 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
7 SNAKE ON A PLANE
8 YOU ARE THE ONE
9 JUPIT
10 STAY ALIVE
11 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
12 LITTLE MAN

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901

1 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
2 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
3 PHILIPPINE IDOL
4 JOSEPH THE DREAMER
5 LITTLE MAN
6 STAY ALIVE
7 JUPIT
8 MORTUARY
9 SNAKES ON A PLANE
10 YOU ARE THE ONE
11 SUKOB
12 CLICK

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749

1 JUPIT
2 CLICK
3 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
4 YOU ARE THE ONE
5 LITTLE MAN
6 SUKOB
7 SNAKE ON A PLANE
8 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
9 YOU ARE THE ONE
10 MORTUARY
11 OH MY GHOST
12 STAY ALIVE

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416

1 SNAKE ON A PLANE
2 MORTUARY
3 STAY ALIVE
4 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
5 YOU ARE THE ONE
6 CLICK
7 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
8 JUPIT
9 SUKOB
10 LITTLE MAN

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488

1 SNAKE ON A PLANE
2 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
3 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
4 CLICK
5 LITTLE MAN
6 YOU ARE THE ONE

SM CITY SOUTHMALL 806-6888

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 STAY ALIVE
3 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
4 YOU ARE THE ONE
5 SNAKES ON A PLANE
6 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
7 LITTLE MAN
8 CLICK
9 JUPIT

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055

1 LITTLE MAN
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
4 SNAKES ON A PLANE

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240

1 JUPIT
2 STAY ALIVE
3 CLICK
4 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
5 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
6 SNAKES ON A PLANE
7 YOU ARE THE ONE
8 LITTLE MAN
9 SUKOB
10 MORTUARY
11 BUTTERFLY EFFECT 2
12 YOU ARE THE ONE

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 LITTLE MAN
3 MORTUARY
4 BUTTERFLY EFFECT 2

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917

1 MORTUARY
2 LITTLE MAN
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 DEVIL WEARS PRADA

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975

1 LITTLE MAN
2 SNAKE ON A PLANE
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 DEVIL WEARS PRADA

movietime

FRESH NEW MOVIES

JUPIT

STAY ALIVE

THE DEVIL WEAR PRADA

SCOOP

YOU ARE THE ONE

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39

1 MIAMI VICE
2 LITTLE MAN
3 JUST MY LUCK
4 YOU ARE THE ONE

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17

1 LITTLE MAN
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 OH MY GHOST
4 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868

1 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
2 OH MY GHOST
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 LITTLE MAN
5 SNAKES A ON PLANE
6 YOU ARE THE ONE
7 SUKOB
8 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

LUZON

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04

1 LITTLE MAN
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 BUTTERFLY EFFECT 2
4 AMERICAN HAUNTING

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80

1 LITTLE MAN
2 BUTTERFLY EFFECT 2
3 UNITED 93
4 YOU ARE THE ONE

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45

1 MIAMI VICE
2 LITTLE MAN
3 STORMBREAKER
4 CLICK
5 YOU ARE THE ONE
6 JUPIT

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85

1 MIAMI VICE
2 MORTUARY
3 LITTLE MAN
4 YOU ARE THE ONE
5 JUPIT
6 YOU ARE THE ONE

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160

1 SNAKE ON A PLANE
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 OH MY GHOST
4 LITTLE MAN

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341265-66

1 LITTLE MAN
2 AMERICAN HAUNTING
3 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
4 YOU ARE THE ONE

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876

1 MIAMI VICE
2 SNAKE ON A PLANE
3 SUKOB
4 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
5 JUPIT
6 MORTUARY
7 YOU ARE THE ONE
8 LITTLE MAN

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422

1 KUBRADOR
2 RESERVED
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 MIAMI VICE
5 CLICK
6 LITTLE MAN
7 RESERVED
8 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998

1 STORMBREAKER
2 JUPIT
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 MORTUARY
5 YOU ARE THE ONE
6 AMERICAN DREAMZ

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884

1 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
2 LITTLE MAN
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 STORMBREAKER

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EVENT CALENDAR SM SHOWTIME EVENT CALENDAR

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MALL OF ASIA

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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 CLICK • THX
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 SNAKES ON THE PLANE
4 LITTLE MAN
5 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
6 SCOOP
7 MORTUARY
8 STAY ALIVE
9 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
10 THE BIG WHITE

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
3 STAY ALIVE
4 SCOOP
5 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
6 SNAKES ON A PLANE
7 LITTLE MAN

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 CLICK
3 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
4 SCOOP
5 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
6 LITTLE MAN
7 SNAKES ON A PLANE
8 SUKOB

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 936-3228-30

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
3 SNAKES ON A PLANE
4 LITTLE MAN

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2576

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
3 SNAKES ON A PLANE
4 LITTLE MAN

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YOU DIE IN THE GAME–YOU DIE FOR REAL.
PLAY IT TO DEATH.
STAY ALIVE
In Theaters August 30

NOW SHOWING at Galleria, Ermita and Pioneer

MTRCB Rating: PG13

STA ROSA (049) 837-0907

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 THE BREAK-UP
3 MORTUARY
4 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 STORMBREAKER
3 MORTUARY
4 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2126 (046) 416-4332

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 MORTUARY
3 LITTLE MAN
4 THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT 2

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 STORMBREAKER
3 AMERICAN DREAMZ
4 TAMARA

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1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
3 MORTUARY
4 LITTLE MAN

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 FIERCED PEOPLE
3 MIAMI VICE
4 MORTUARY
5 LITTLE MAN
6 YOU ARE THE MAN

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 MIAMI VICE
3 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
4 FIERCED PEOPLE
5 LITLLE MAN
6 CLICK

ILOILO (033) 336-8070

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 MIAMI VICE
3 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
4 LITTLE MAN

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Hopefully, not Bamboo clones

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

REVIEW

A HORDE OF SLAM-DANCING teenage punks helped jump-start the first regional finals of the "Colt 45 Rockista 2006," a talent search for rock vocalists, Saturday night at the amphitheater of the Marikina Riverbanks.

Hyped as "the first and only nationwide search for true-blooded, ultra-talented and truly Filipino rock star vocalists," the amateur competition rides heavily on the promotional blitz of the beer product Colt 45, which currently has Bamboo as endorser.

In fact, contest mechanics require that aspirants submit a demo tape containing two tracks: one English (foreign) cover and one song by the band Bamboo.

Aside from the Metro Manila/Central Luzon leg last Saturday, nine other regional final rounds will cover Central/Eastern Visayas (Cebu, Sept. 2), North/Western Mindanao (Cagayan de Oro, Sept. 9), North/Eastern Mindanao (Butuan, Sept. 10), South Luzon (Lucena, Sept. 22), Central/Western Visayas (Dumaguete, Sept. 23), Southern Mindanao (Davao, Sept. 29), Western Visayas (Bacolod, Oct. 6), North/Central Lu

HOPEFULLY/ F3

LESTER LAPUZ, winner. Just like a real rock star

NINO FAMILIANO: Authentic talent

LAMBERT REYES: Impressive performance

SHEENA REYES: Lone female challenger PHOTOS BY ROMY HOMILLADA

sheer pleasure.
no guilt.

great taste, no calories
500 mL
Coca-Cola light

Having It All

Some people want to live life on their own terms, get what they want, without any hassle. And who wouldn't? Imagine a buff body without having to work out. Or wearing those sexy four-inch stilettos without pinched toes and painful feet! Life would be so much better! In fact, it would be just like Coke Light-- all the great taste you love, and none of the calories you don't. You can have as much as you want without any worries!

In an alternate world where you could really have it all: there would be stolen kisses without getting slapped. You could shoot from the half-court line and not miss. Enjoy romantic movie without cheesy lines, and eat cheese popcorn without getting yellow fingers. You could enjoy the best of everything without any consequences.

Well perhaps you can't always get what you want. But you can definitely have it all with Coke Light. All pleasure, no guilt. This you can be sure of.

So grab a Coke Light now. It's the first step to having it all.

great taste, no calories
Coca-Cola light
330 mL

great taste. no calories.
Have it ALL

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Leading the launch ceremony were (from left) ECN director Rolando Tanchanco, EPCIB chairperson and ECN director Corazon dela Paz, EPCIB senior executive vice president Walter Wassmer, and ECN assistant vice president for marketing issuing Anna Marie Cruz.

Equitable CardNetwork (ECN) and MasterCard give Filipino cardholders the luxury of touring the world in style with the new Equitable PCI Bank ***Travel Card Titanium MasterCard***.

Touted as the only card you'll need when you travel, the new Equitable PCI Bank ***Travel Card Titanium MasterCard*** offers a wide range of travel perks from Equitable, exclusive privileges from PoloAir Travel and Tours, and the vast global services of MasterCard.

"We introduce with pride the Equitable PCI Bank ***Travel Card Titanium MasterCard***, the perfect credit card for Filipinos who love to travel. This exciting, upscale and new card program is valid for redemption of free flights on any airline of choice by our premium cardholders, as they accumulate reward points on their ***Travel Card Titanium MasterCard***. The exclusive privileges will serve our valued cardholders well, as they explore wonderful places here and abroad," said Anna Marie A. Cruz, ECN assistant vice president for marketing issuing.

The Equitable PCI Bank ***Travel Card Titanium MasterCard*** provides free passport renewal services, rebate on excess baggage, preferred check-in assistance, discounts on travel packages, and miles program for a free trip through PoloAir Travel and Tours.

With the new ***Travel Card Titanium MasterCard,*** cardholders can enjoy comforting privileges when traveling with access to VIP lounges in over 500 international airports through Priority Pass - the world's largest independent airport VIP lounge access program. Cardholders have access to airport VIP lounges, irrespective of airline and class of travel. They also get to enjoy other privileges such as complimentary refreshments, free newspapers, Internet access, and even use of conference and shower facilities, where available.

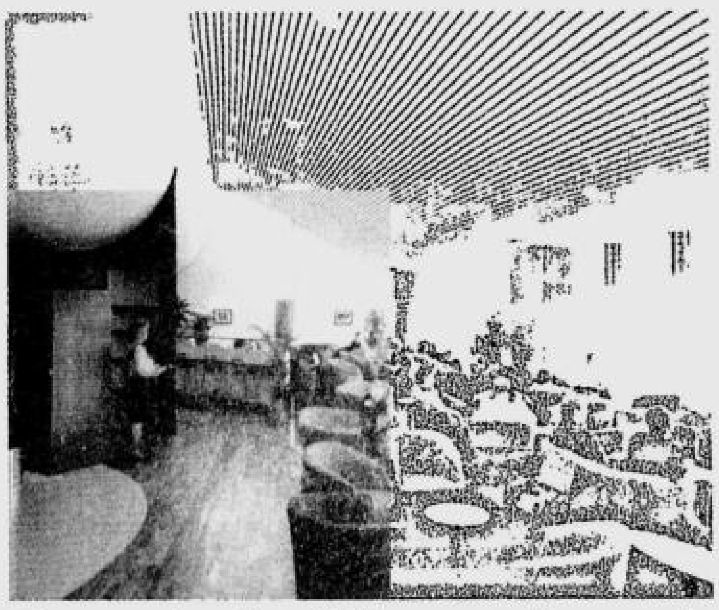
When used to purchase the cardholders' entire fare, the Equitable PCI Bank ***Travel Card Titanium MasterCard*** provides domestic and international travel insurance of up to P20 million. Additionally, it has convenient travel-related features, such as the Equitable Travel Mate Rewards, which allows cardholders to choose from a wide array of unique items that serve as "travel mates"; special perks and discounts at selected dining, shopping and recreational establishments worldwide; and Separate Peso and Dollar Credit Limits with Dual Billing for domestic and international purchases.

Being a MasterCard, the Equitable PCI Bank ***Travel Card Titanium MasterCard*** gives cardholders access to the MasterCard Concierge Service, the 24/7 provider of professional assistance for travel, personal, medical, lifestyle, and vehicular needs; and the luxury of transacting in over 32 million commercial establishments in more than 210 countries worldwide.

Complementing these benefits are access to the Equitable Card Online Service for e-statements or payments of outstanding balance via www.equitablecard.com; the 24-hour Equitable Hello Service for account information, lost or stolen card reporting or requests for faxed billing statement; Payment Convenience with payment centers in over 400 branches of Equitable PCI and Equitable Savings Bank, Megalink, and SM Bills Payment-Service Counters; Lite Payment Facility; E-Pay Installment Plan; Balance Transfer E-Pay Facility; and Cash Advance Program.

With the new Equitable PCI Bank ***Travel Card Titanium MasterCard***, the only card they will need during a trip, Filipinos have finally found their ideal traveling companion.

Be a VIP traveler with *Priority Pass*™



The peace and comfort of VIP lounges are all yours to enjoy

One of the pains of traveling is the usual hassle a busy airport brings - a noisy environment, crowded seats, long queue at the snack counter. Not to mention putting up with delayed flights and longer waiting time for connecting flights.

But then, there is still a way for you to get the same luxuries enjoyed by VIP travelers in international airports: Priority Pass.

The world's largest independent airport VIP lounge access program, Priority Pass provides passage to over 500 lounges in over 90 countries around the world, irrespective of one's class of travel, airline flown or existing membership in an airline loyalty program.

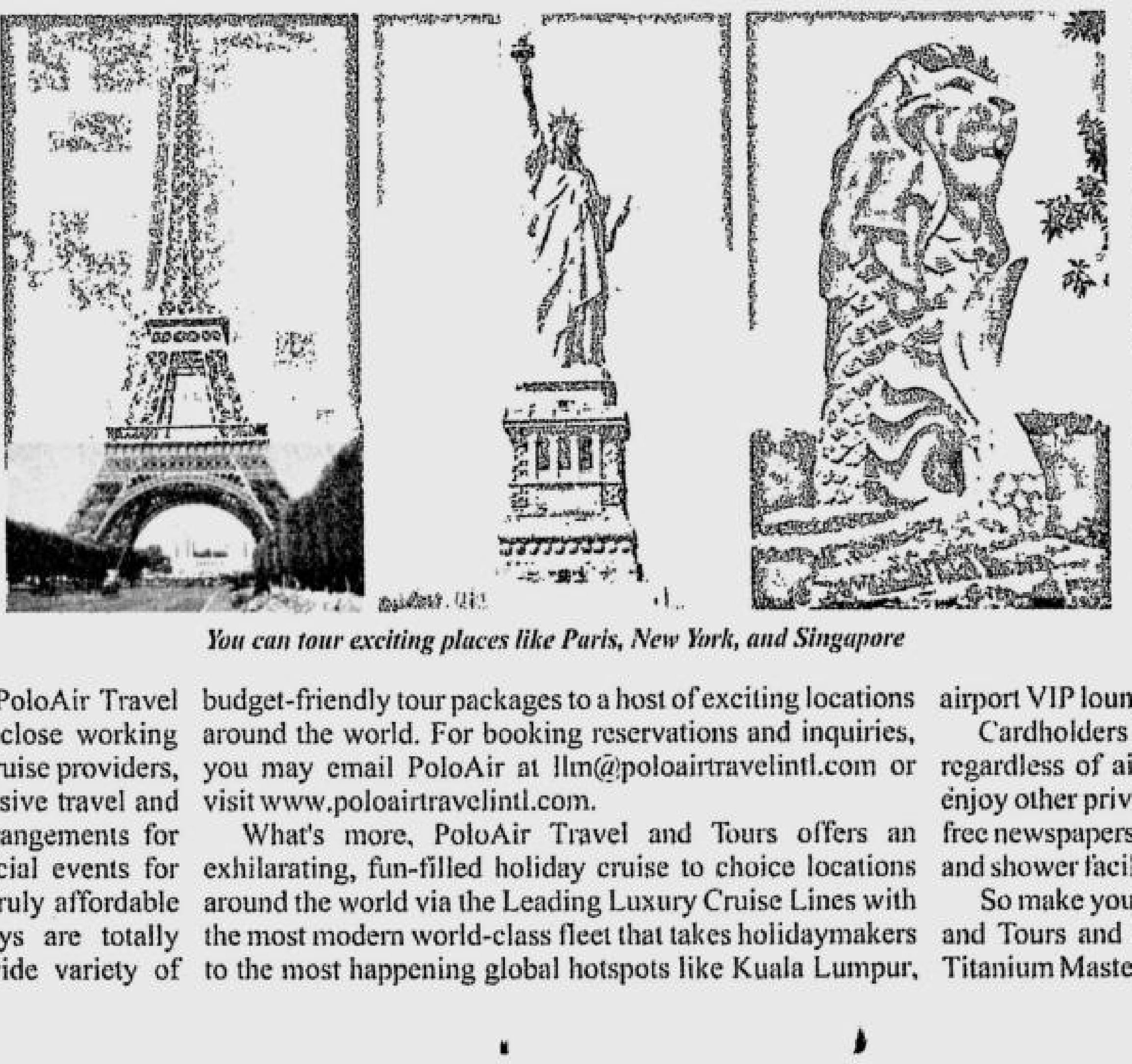
Even if you're flying economy class, you can avail of special privileges usually accorded VIPs, like complimentary refreshments, free newspapers, Internet access, and even use of conference and shower facilities, where available.

With Priority Pass, you can spend airport time by relaxing in the peace and comfort of club-class lounges or you can be more productive by doing paperwork, catching up on voice mails and messages, and making calls.

Launched in 1992 to make airport lounges accessible to more travelers, Priority Pass has over one million members, who enjoy VIP treatment when they go on a trip.

You, too, can take advantage of these Priority Pass benefits in the new Equitable PCI Bank Travel Card Titanium MasterCard, the only card you'll need when you travel. The card carries comprehensive travel privileges, like the Equitable Travel Mate Rewards program with miles-earning feature, exclusive perks from PoloAir Travel Tours. P20-million domestic and international insurance, separate Peso and Dollar credit limits, dual billing, and the vast global coverage of MasterCard and its premium services, MasterCard Moments and MasterCard Concierge Service.

Earn miles and travel the world for free with Travel Card Titanium MasterCard and PoloAir Travel and Tours



You can tour exciting places like Paris, New York, and Singapore

The chance to travel to any destination in the world is always a wonderful opportunity especially if you can do it for free! How? Simply use your Equitable PCI Bank Travel Card Titanium MasterCard card and enjoy a wealth of travel perks and freebies.

PoloAir Travel and Tours, through its partnership with Equitable Card Network, Inc., lets you, the cardholders, benefit from utmost convenience via free passport renewal and rebates on excess baggage. Plus, take advantage of generous discounts on travel packages and earn miles that you can exchange for free trips, when you keep using your Equitable PCI Bank Travel Card Titanium MasterCard.

Convenient and cost-efficient traveling is yours to indulge in when you book at PoloAir Travel and Tours. With over 12 years of experience in the travel business, PoloAir Travel and Tours has established over the years close working relationships with the leading air, land and cruise providers, and moreover, designs the most comprehensive travel and vacation packages, featuring the finest arrangements for transportation, hotels, sightseeing and special events for domestic and international travel needs at truly affordable costs. PoloAir ensures that your holidays are totally hassle-free and memorable featuring a wide variety of budget-friendly tour packages to a host of exciting locations around the world. For booking reservations and inquiries, you may email PoloAir at llm@poloairtravelintl.com or visit www.poloairtravelintl.com.

What's more, PoloAir Travel and Tours offers an exhilarating, fun-filled holiday cruise to choice locations around the world via the Leading Luxury Cruise Lines with the most modern world-class fleet that takes holidaymakers to the most happening global hotspots like Kuala Lumpur, Thailand, Vietnam, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, India, Cambodia, Italy, Greece, Istanbul, Croatia and Egypt.

Of course, it goes without saying that a reliable travel companion is a must whenever you go globetrotting, like the new Equitable PCI Bank Travel Card Titanium MasterCard. Touted as the only card you'll ever need when you travel, the new Equitable PCI Bank Travel Card Titanium MasterCard offers a wide range of travel perks from Equitable, and the vast global services of MasterCard.

With the new Equitable PCI Bank Travel Card Titanium MasterCard, cardholders can enjoy comforting privileges when traveling as they enjoy access to VIP lounges in over 500 international airports through Priority Pass - the world's largest independent airport VIP lounge access program.

Cardholders likewise have access to airport VIP lounges, regardless of airline and class of travel. They also get to enjoy other privileges such as complimentary refreshments, free newspapers, internet access, and even use of conference and shower facilities, where available.

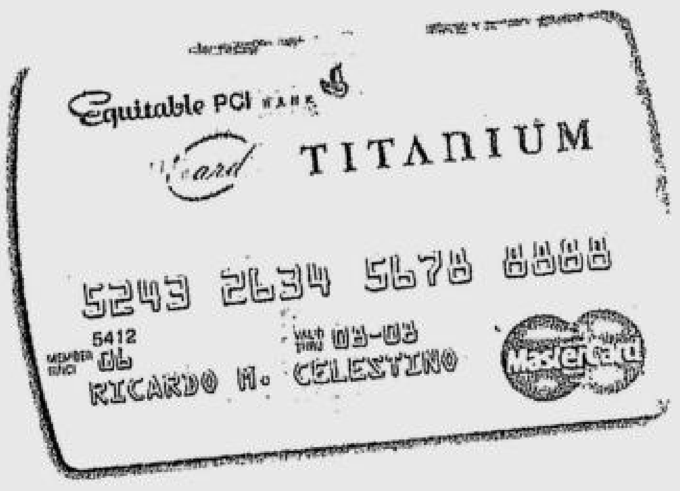
So make your trips truly worthwhile with PoloAir Travel and Tours and the new Equitable PCI Bank Travel Card Titanium MasterCard.

New Equitable PCI Bank Travel C

Equitable CardNetwork and MasterCard celebrated the introduction of the Equitable PCI Bank Travel Card Titanium MasterCard with a "high-flying" event that gave guests a preview of what's in store for them with the new card.

Themed "Come Fly with Me" and hosted by "Captain" Anthony Pangilinan and "flight crew" Agot Isidro, the event toured guests to the new "world of enviable luxury" presented by the new Equitable PCI Bank Travel Card Titanium MasterCard, the only card you'll ever need when you travel.

"Captain" Anthony Pangilinan and "flight crew" Agot Isidro



Top executives of Equitable, headed by EPCIB chairperson and ECN director Corazon dela Paz, EPCIB senior executive vice president Walter Wassmer, assistant vice president for marketing issuing Anna Marie A. Cruz, and director Rolly Tanchanco were on hand to launch the new card.

"We're pleased and honored to introduce the new member of the Equitable Card family, the Equitable PCI Bank Travel Card Titanium MasterCard. It's another historic event for us. This indicates much more than the introduction of a new card for this is another measure of the relentless achievement of Equitable CardNetwork," said chairperson Corazon dela Paz. "This pioneering achievement will benefit cardholders particularly frequent travelers as it elevates the spending power of the cardholders, serving as a VIP card, security card and flight companion."

Anton Corro of MasterCard and Arnold Saniano of ECN

Equitable
AIRLINES

Rolly Ramirez and Richard Relucio

Joining them in celebrating the launch of this revolutionary travel card were MasterCard officials, headed by Jose Rene Villa-Real, vice president and senior country manager for the Philippines, Judith Dayrit, VP for member relations and marketing, Anton Corro, director, operations and member relations, and Rochelle Leyba, member relations, as well as Leah Martinez, PoloAir Travel and Tours general manager.

"We are glad to add the new Equitable PCI Bank Travel Card Titanium MasterCard to our growing premium card portfolio. This new Titanium card reflects MasterCard's commitment to open up new markets for our member banks to leverage and at the same time provide superior services and benefits to our growing cardholder base," said Villa-Real.

Providing entertainment were Agot Isidro and the Hotlegs, who toured guests to some of the world's most fabulous destinations, like Japan, Latin America and India. Gurano band also performed as guests partied the night away.

Guests were likewise treated to a couple of surprises by ECN. Lovely "stewardesses" handed out the guests' pre-approved Equitable PCI Bank Travel Card Titanium MasterCard credit cards,

Sony Ericsson
M600
Platinum MasterCard
MasterCard

Platinum MasterCard

Gold MasterCard

Sony Ericsson

Here's something to get you charging for the new M600i.

Purchase an M600i with your Platinum MasterCard, Titanium MasterCard or Gold MasterCard and get a free CLA 60 Car Charger kit. Hurry now and catch this sweet deal at your nearest participating Sony Ericsson dealer.

- This promotion is exclusive to Premium MasterCard (Gold MasterCard, Titanium MasterCard and/or Platinum MasterCard) cardholders only.
- Promotion period is from August 23 until October 3, 2006.
- Every purchase of Sony Ericsson M600i from the following participating outlets such as a) **Sony Ericsson Concept Shops** in SM North EDSA, Digital Exchange Glorietta 1, Greenbelt 1, SM Mall of Asia, Ayala Center Cebu City b)**Avant** in Greenbelt 4 c) **Abenson shops** in Glorietta 1, Eastwood Libis, Robinsons Galleria, Shangrila Plaza Mall d) **Automatic Centre shops** in Glorietta 4, Gateway Mall, Festival Supermall and North Edsa entitles the customer to a free CLA 60 Car Charger kit.
- The purchase must be an approved bank transaction to be valid for the promotion.
- If credit card transaction is successful, the receipt of the customer will be stamped with VALID FOR THE PROMOTION by the cashier.
- After redeeming the premium item, the Premium MasterCard cardholder receipt will be stamped with CLAIMED.
- Said receipts stamped with CLAIMED cannot be used again.
- Only one (1) premium item for every valid single straight purchase of a Sony Ericsson M600i Gold MasterCard, Titanium MasterCard and Platinum MasterCard.
- The premium item is not convertible to cash nor can it be exchanged for another item.
- Claiming period of premium item shall be until December 3, 2006, which is 60 days from end of promotion period.

For further info, please call (02) 635-1860 or text SE HELP to 2960. P 2.50 per text message. Per DTI Permit No. 2584, Series of 2006.

G-3

ard Titanium MasterCard flies high

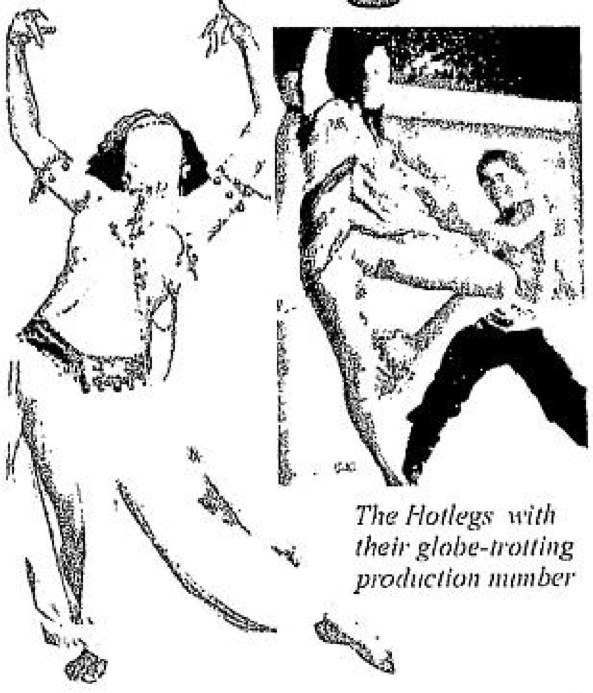
ECN's Richard Martin, Anna Marie Cruz, Niki Jane Chua, Mary Ann Marquez and Buddy Mijares

Equitable
One Thousand Dollars
Shopping

Manuel Lopez Cruz (center) wins $1,000 worth of credits loaded into his pre-approved Equitable Travel Card Titanium MasterCard together with (from left) EPCIB chairperson and ECN director Corazon dela Paz, MasterCard VP and senior country manager Poch Villa-Real, and EPCIB SEVP Walter Wassmer.

which they swiped on wireless terminals set up by ECN to book discounted travel packages for one night only from PoloAir and to visit the "Ode To the Pasig River" Exhibit displayed at the Ayala Museum, proceeds of which went to the cause of the Pasig River. ECN also raffled off shopping credits worth $1,000, $800, and $500.

The launch definitely put guests on a "high" as they discovered how they can spend their business and leisure trips in style with the best traveling companion one can have, the Equitable PCI Bank Travel Card Titanium MasterCard.



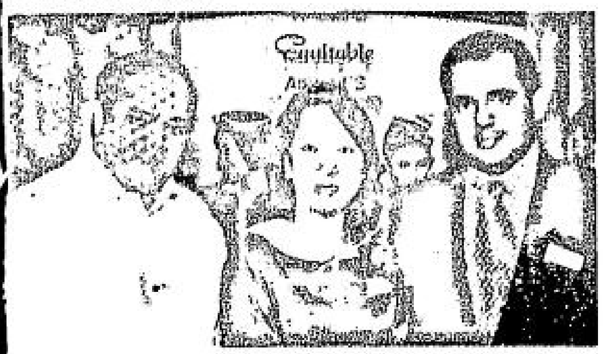
The Hotlegs with their globe-trotting production number

Dennis Velasquez, Ophelia Camina, Sergio Naranjilla, Jr and Marili Tioseco

Poch Villa-Real of MasterCard, Agot Isidro and ECN director Rolly Tanchanco

Judith Dayrit of MasterCard, Anna Marie Cruz of ECN and Leah Martinez of PoloAir

Fulgencio Factoran Jr, Edmund Tan and Francisco Vista Jr



Albert Uttamchandani, Judy Go and Rajan Uttamchandani

ECN's Philip So, Anna Castaneda, Teresita Silbor, Harry Gua and Kyle Carls

Anna Cruz showing her new Titanium card with friendly "stewardesses" at the reception area

Consistent commitment.
2005
Reader's Digest Philippines SUPER BRAND 2005 voted by consumers Gold
2006
Reader's Digest Philippines TRUSTED BRAND 2006 voted by consumers Gold

Your Bank of Choice is Reader's Digest Gold Winner for 2 years in a row.

Equitable PCI Bank has earned Reader's Digest's most coveted awards for the years 2005 and 2006 – the SuperBrand 2005 and Trusted Brand 2006 gold awards in the Philippine market. Based on the most comprehensive and reputable survey of Asian consumers' preferences, the Reader's Digest Awards are evidence of Equitable PCI Bank's high standards of service, as well as the strong reputation of value and prevailing sense of confidence it has earned from the discerning populace. Truly, these milestones prove to the world that our commitment to serve has earned your utmost approval, making us your Bank of Choice.

Equitable PCI BANK
Your Bank of Choice

Contact our Call Center at 84-911 (Metro Manila)
PLDT 1-800-188-84-911 and Digitel 1-800-333-84-911 (Provincial)
or visit www.equitablepcib.com

ASSET ASIAN AWARDS 2004 Asset TRIPLE A
ASSET ASIAN AWARDS 2005 Asset TRIPLE A

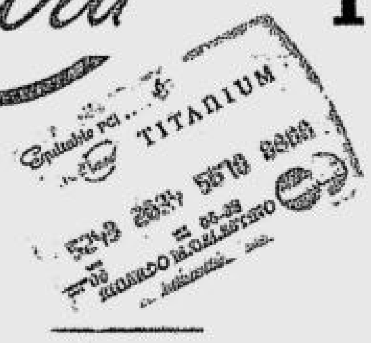
MegaLink
Member of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation.
Maximum Deposit Insurance for Each Depositor P250,000.

Equitable
CARD

THE ONLY CARD
YOU'LL NEED
WHEN YOU TRAVEL.

SAN FRANCISCO
Equitable PCI BANK
TITANIUM
5243 2634 5678 8888
5243
MEMBER SINCE 06
VALID THRU 06-08
RICARDO M. CELESTINO
MasterCard
PARIS

TravelCard TITANIUM


Equitable PCI BANK
TITANIUM
5243 2634 5678 8888
RICARDO M. CELESTINO

On top of all the conveniences you expect from an international premium credit card, the Equitable Travel Card Titanium allows you to:

- **ENJOY**... unparalleled special travel service and privileges via POLOAIR Travel and Tours like FREE passport renewal, REBATE on excess baggage, DISCOUNTS on travel packages, and AIR MILEAGE program on any airline of your choice!
- **EXPERIENCE**...peace of mind with travel insurance coverage of up to P20 million for you and your family.
- **TRAVEL** in style...with VIP access to Airport Lounges worldwide via *Priority Pass*™
- **INDULGE**... in two rewards programs: the exclusive *Equitable Travel Mate Rewards* suitable to your globe-trotting lifestyle on top of the regular *Equitable Advantage Plus Rewards* Program.
- **TREAT** yourself... to the exclusive *Lifestyle+Travel Perks* for local discounts from prestigious establishments when you shop, dine, relax and take a vacation, plus offers from MasterCard Moments™ global partners.
- **ACCESS**...worldwide concierge service with just one phone call via MasterCard moments™ *Concierge Service* like lost luggage assistance, hotel info and car hire services.

APPLY NOW!
Call 867-79-77 or 1-800-1888-3264
or visit us at www.equitablecard.com

MasterCard

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

Watsons honors retail partners in a glitzy awards bash

By Raquel P. Gomez

Glitz, glamour, and all that jazz filled the recently held Watsons Health and Beauty Awards at the grand ballroom of Hotel Philippine Plaza as seven companies received major awards for exhibiting exemplary achievements in sales, product innovation, launches, promotional activity, service level and account management.

Watsons Health and Beauty Awards, launched in the Philippines last year, recognizes the contributions made by its retail partners in the development of Watsons' business in the Philippines.

Watsons, the authority on health care and beauty products, made the event memorable by making the awards night one of pomp, prestige and splendor with the theme and music of the Broadway musicals serving as the perfect backdrop to the gathering of the companies involved in the health and beauty business.

"This is an exciting and important night for us as we consider the annual awards as very prestigious because in an even bigger magnitude compared to last year, Watsons is recognizing the importance and endeavors of these companies who made the lives of Filipinos better by improving their quality of shopping enjoyment," said Andrew Denby, country manager of Watsons Personal Care Philippines.

"The Health and Beauty Awards is designed to highlight and reinforce the values we hold key in driving successful long-term business relationships. This is also an opportunity to celebrate the success of specific products, promotions and most importantly the people whose contributions have added value to our partnership during 2005," Denby added.

Companies who received major Health and Beauty awards from Watsons were Unilever, Ever Bilena, Wyeth, Colgate-Palmolive, Unilab, and Boehringer Ingelheim. Special Awards recipients included Watsons Scratch-A-SurPrize Mazda winner Purificacion Ignacio and Tahanang Walang Hagdanan, which received the P1-million proceeds from Watsons 2006 calendars as part of its corporate social responsibility program.

Watsons has been handing out Health and Beauty awards to its retail partners in the region for more than 10 years. Watsons Health and Beauty Awards started in Hong Kong and Taiwan followed by Singapore and Malaysia, then the Philippines.

"The Health and Beauty Awards underscores the special relationship between us and our partners," said Robert Sun, Watsons merchandising director. "Through the Health and Beauty Awards, Watsons puts a spotlight on suppliers that have performed well. This is our way of making our partners feel important by applauding their efforts."

"The traditional way of doing business for most consumer goods stores has not focused on the role of manufacturers and suppliers. Watsons pioneers in this effort to recognize the retailers through the Health and Beauty Awards. We sincerely thank them for their active role in making the health and beauty industry flourish," said Bobby Saneo, Watsons activation marketing manager.

For one memorable night, Watsons honored its retail partners in an extravagant show, where show biz personalities Edu Manzano, Bituin Escalante, Agot Isidro and Bimbo Cerrudo added pizzazz to the wonderful event. Big and colorful production numbers by health and beauty companies added glitz to the show. The Manila Philharmonic Orchestra provided the music.

Watsons gave away 19 major awards, 7 grand awards and 103 special awards across numerous categories including sales, innovation, product launches, promotional activity, service levels and account management.

The Watsons Health and Beauty Awards does not end in the winning products receiving the recognition during the awards night. To celebrate the success of these products that won the Health and Beauty Awards, they will be displayed in all Watsons stores with special badges such as "Health and Beauty's Best Performers" based on sales and popularity among consumers. This is to generate information to the public that the products sold at Watsons are of the best quality.

Watsons Personal Care Store is part of the health and beauty store chain of A.S. Watsons, a wholly owned subsidiary of Hong Kong-based Hutchison Whampoa Ltd. The group operates a total of 19 retail brands with over 7,400 stores in health, beauty, food, electronics and general merchandise, airport duty-free items, and beverages including bottled water.

Watsons was established in the Philippines in 2002. Currently, Watsons operates 163 stores in the Philippines in partnership with retail giant SM.

Watsons and its partners award the P1-million donation to Tahanang Walang Hagdanan.

The McKenzie group came as characters from 'Phantom of the Opera'.

Edu Manzano hosts the H&B Awards.

Andrew Denby with L'Oreal general manager David Ennes.

Melody Yap and Bobby Saneo host the after party.

Lorelie Espiritu of White Beauty (center) receives Most Improved Sales of the Year Award (Health).

Agot Isidro and Bimbo Cerrudo sing a Broadway duet.

Big Spender production number with Watsons executives

Andrew Denby awards the Mazda 3 to the Scratch-A-SurPrize promo winner Purificacion Bote-Ignacio.

International Partner of the Year (Personal Care)—Unilever

Sanofi Aventis with Watsons' Daisy Yu, Melody Yap and Khristine Tallado

Agot Isidro doing a Broadway number

Colgate Palmolive receives Best in Service Level Award.

Wyeth Consumer Healthcare dressed as characters from Evita with Watsons Division Merchandise Manager Aida Lapez (center).

Unisell headed by its president Manuel Sua

Unilab receives Promotions Partner for Health award with Robert Sun, Stanley Perez and Andrew Denby.

Ever Bilena Cosmetics Inc, headed by Dioseldo Sy and Silliman Sy.

Chicago production number

AWARD	2006 WINNER
International Partner of the Year (Personal Care)	UNILEVER
Philippine Supplier of the Year (Personal Care)	EVER BILENA
Supplier of the Year (Health)	WYETH CONSUMER HEALTHCARE
Best in Service Level (Health)	BOEHRINGER INGELHEIM
Best in Service Level (Personal Care)	COLGATE PALMOLIVE
Promotions Partner (Health)	UNITED LABORATORIES
Promotions Partner (Beauty)	UNILEVER

BEAUTY

New Supplier Partner of the Year	ULTRA POWER FOREST GUGO
Most Improved Comparable Performance	L'OREAL
Innovative In-store Display Concept	VMV Hypoallergencis
Best Mall Animation	CALVIN KLEIN by Luxasia
Best Exclusive Product of the Year	PROACTIV (Top American)
Most Innovative Product of the Year	AIRBRUSH LEGS by SALLY HANSEN
Key Account Manager of the Year	Cosmetics/ Fragrances & Skin - CHERI MASIPAG (Unilever Phils.) Health - ALVY POSADAS (Unilab) Personal Care - BAMBI PELAYO (Glaxo Smith Kline Consumer)

PHARMA

New Supplier Partner of the Year	PERFECTAIRE
Most Improved Sales Performance	WHITE BEAUTY
Best In-Store Promo Activities	UNITED LABORATORIES
Best Mall Animation	INTEGRATED MARKETING AND DISTRIBUTION SERVICES (IMDS)
Best New Product of the Year	XANDO by PERFECTAIRE
OTC (Over the Counter) Brand of the Year	CENTRUM by WYETH
Ethical Brand of the Year	VENTOLIN by GLAXOSMITHKLINE
Generic Brand of the Year	RITEMED by UNITED LABORATORIES

HEALTH & BEAUTY'S HOTTEST ACTS 2006

Ponds Renewal Lift Collagenique Intensive Serum 30mL

Ponds White Beauty Detox Gold Cream 40 mL

Palmolive Naturals Shampoo Anti-Dandruff 200mL

Dove Fresh Moisture Deo 17g

Colgate Toothbrush 360° with Tongue Cleaner

Cream Silk Protect Plus 200mL

Colgate Toothpaste Kool Menthol with Cooling Crystals 150mL

Nivea Deo Extra Whitening Spray 150 mL

Nivea Deo Stick Extra Whitening 40mL

Nivea Deo Extra Whitening Night Cream 50mL

Watsons
your personal store

2006
Watso
BES
PERFOR

a. **Nivea** Visage Vit C 40mL	409.75
b. **Nivea** Spot Corrector 30mL	309.75
c. **Nivea** Whitening Lotion 400mL	299.75
d. **Nivea** Whitening Eye Cream 15mL	159.75
e. **Nivea** Extra Whitening Deo Stick 40mL	154.75
f. **Nivea** Extra Whitening Aerosol Spray 150mL	149.75
g. **Nivea** Triple Action Lotion 200mL	127.75
h. **Nivea** For Men Whitening Moisturizer 40g	118.00
i. **Nivea** For Men Whitening Facial Foam 100g	118.00
j. **Nivea** Whitening Deo Night Cream 50mL	124.75

MC KENZIE
DIST.

Nivea
Body Lotion
Brand of the year

Nivea
Masstige Skin Care
Brand of the year

Nivea
Skin Treatment
Brand of the year

Nivea
Deodorant
Brand of the year

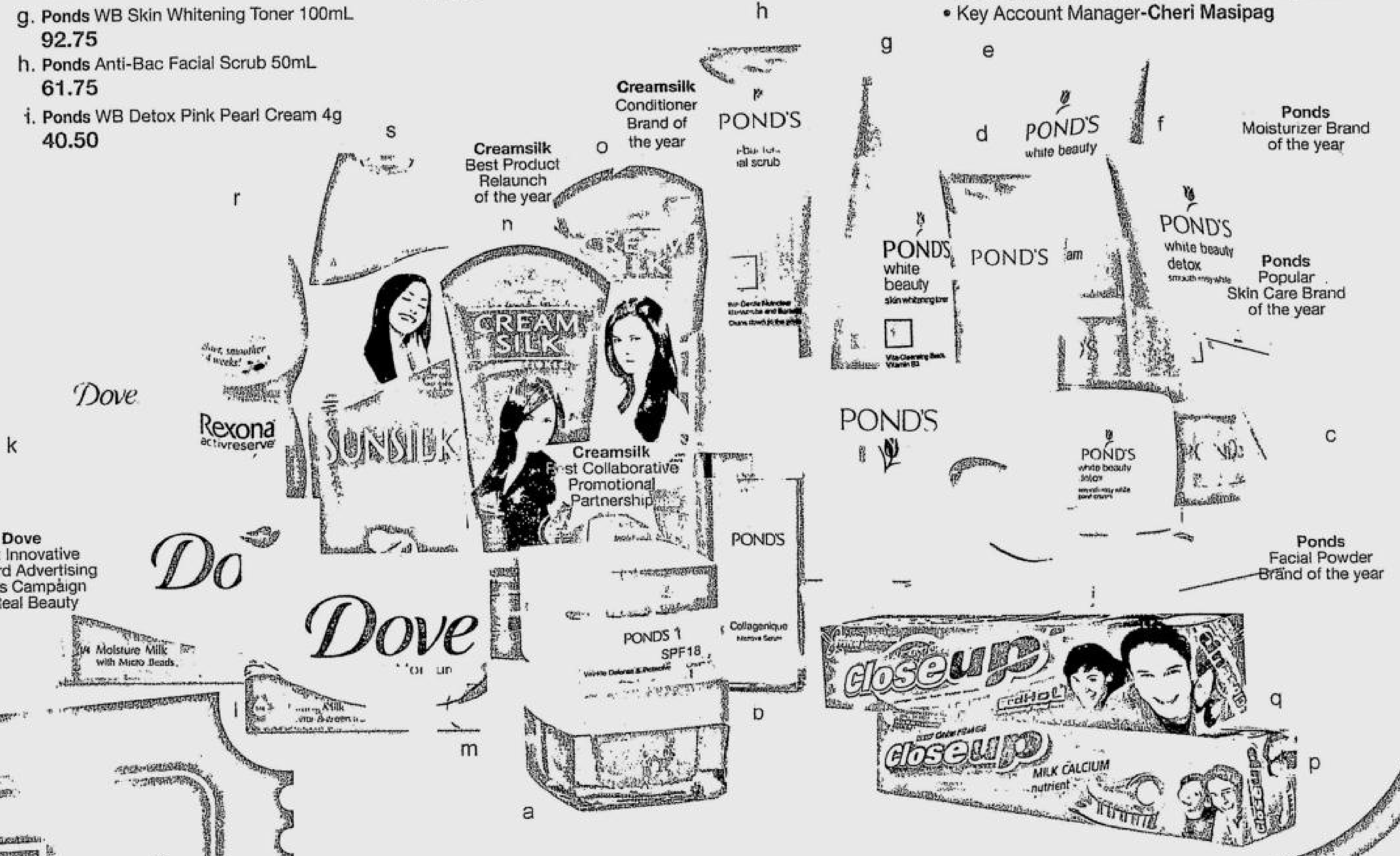
a. **Ponds** Age Solution Defying Cream
619.75
b. **Ponds** Renewal Lift Collagenique Serum
499.75
c. **Ponds** WB Detox 2-way Powder Pink White 10g
245.00
d. **Ponds** WB Detox Facial Wash 100mL
118.75
e. **Ponds** WB Detox Gold Cream 40mL
104.75
f. **Ponds** WB Detox Pink Cream 40mL
93.75
g. **Ponds** WB Skin Whitening Toner 100mL
92.75
h. **Ponds** Anti-Bac Facial Scrub 50mL
61.75
i. **Ponds** WB Detox Pink Pearl Cream 4g
40.50

j. **Ponds** Face Powder Blue 10g
106.75
k. **Dove** Fresh Moisture Deo 17g
70.00
l. **Dove** Cream Bar Exfoliating Blue 100g
50.00
m. **Dove** Cream Bar Fresh Moisture 100g
51.75
n. **Creamsilk** Protect Plus 200mL
102.75
o. **Creamsilk** Soft & Straight 200mL
102.75

p. **Close-Up** with Milk Calcium 100mL
59.75
q. **Close-Up** Red Hot 100mL
54.75
r. **Rexona** Pro Balance Roll-On 40mL
56.75
s. **Sunsilk** Soft Touch (Pink) 100mL
44.75

UNILEVER PHILS
International Partner of the Year Personal Care

- Promotions Partner-Personal Care
- Most Innovative Promotions-**Unilever Travel Pack**
- Most Innovative in-Store POP-**Ponds Arc**
- Best Collaborative Advertising Partnership-**Axe**
- Key Account Manager-**Cheri Masipag**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Dove
Rexona activreserve
SUNSILK
CREAM SILK
POND'S
POND'S white beauty detox
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Moisture Milk with Micro Beads
PONDS 1 SPF18
Collagenique
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MILK CALCIUM nutrient
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Creamsilk
Conditioner Brand of the year

Creamsilk
Best Product Relaunch of the year

Ponds
Moisturizer Brand of the year

Ponds
Popular Skin Care Brand of the year

Creamsilk
Best Collaborative Promotional Partnership

Dove
Most Innovative Billboard Advertising Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty

Ponds
Facial Powder Brand of the year

Steal the show with the Hottest Acts!

d. **Palmolive** Naturals Anti-Dandruff Conditioner 200mL
78.75
e. **Palmolive** Naturals Anti-Dandruff Conditioner 100mL
46.75
f. **Palmolive** Naturals Anti-Dandruff Conditioner 12mL
3.50

COLGATE PALMOLIVE
Best In Service Level

a. **Palmolive** Naturals Anti-Dandruff Shampoo 200mL
78.75
b. **Palmolive** Naturals Anti-Dandruff Shampoo 100mL
43.75
c. **Palmolive** Naturals Anti-Dandruff Shampoo 12mL
4.50

- Toothbrush Brand of the year-**Colgate**
- Toothpaste Brand of the year-**Colgate**
- Most Innovative Advertising of the year-**Colgate**

d
a
e
b
c
f
New!
Palmolive Naturals CONDITIONER ANTI-DANDRUFF
VITACREME & EUCALYPTUS EXTRACT
Palmolive Naturals SHAMPOO ANTI-DANDRUFF
TEA TREE & EUCALYPTUS EXTRACT
DANDRUFF
200ml
100ml
Palmolive Naturals SHAMPOO
Palmolive Naturals CONDITIONER

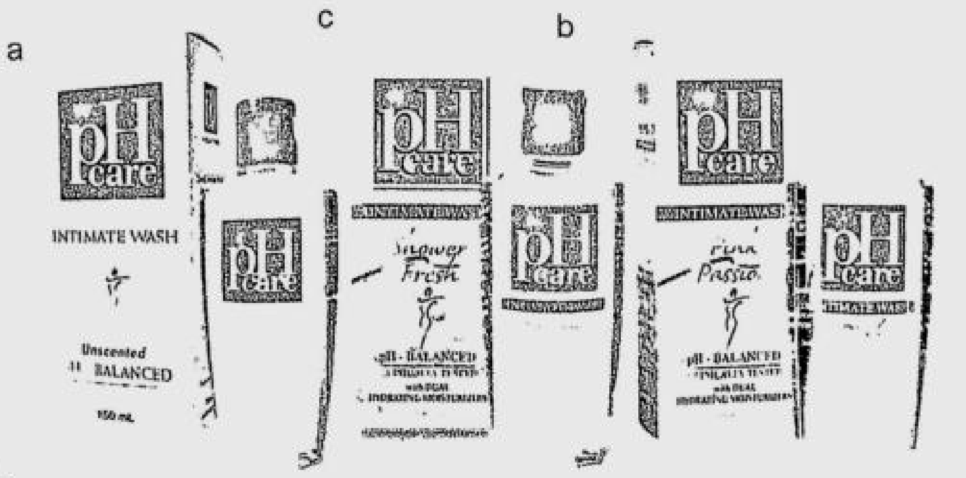
Palmolive Naturals Brilliant Shine Shampoo Brand of the year

HEALTH & BEAUTY'S HOTTEST ACTS 2006

Watsons BEST PERFORMERS 06

UNITED LABORATORIES

- a. **PH Care** Intimate Wash Unscented 150mL
  96.75
- b. **PH Care** Intimate Wash Pink Passion 150mL
  96.75
- c. **PH Care** Intimate Wash Shower Fresh 150mL
  96.75


a
c
b
pH care
INTIMATE WASH
Unscented
BALANCED
150 mL
Shower Fresh
pH - BALANCED
Pink Passion

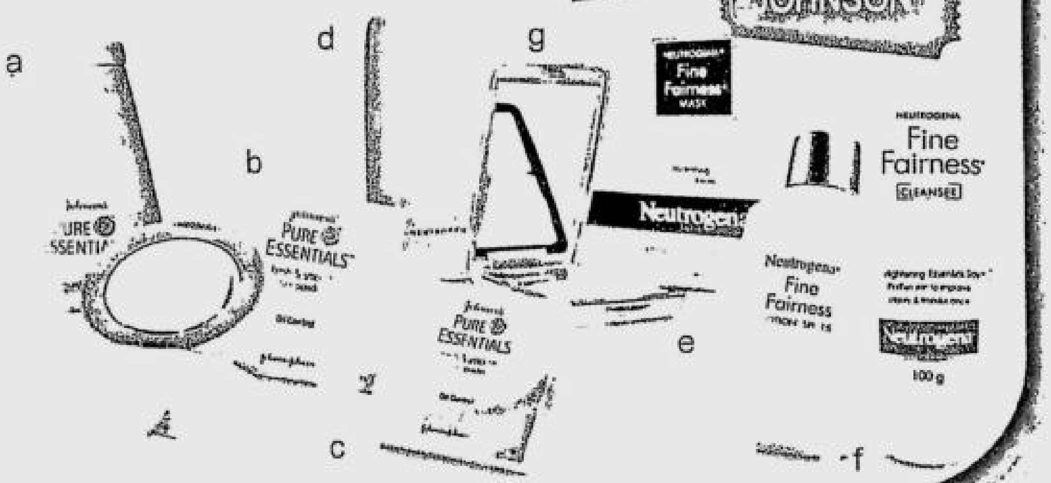
UNITED LABORATORIES

- a. **Celeteque** Facial Moisturizer w/ Pump 200mL
  324.75
- b. **Celeteque** Facial Wash w/ Pump 250mL
  239.75
- c. **Myra- E** Facial Moisturizer 50mL
  74.75

c
a
b
Myra e
Facial Moisturizer
Céleteque
Facial Moisturizer
200 mL
Céleteque
Facial Wash
250 mL

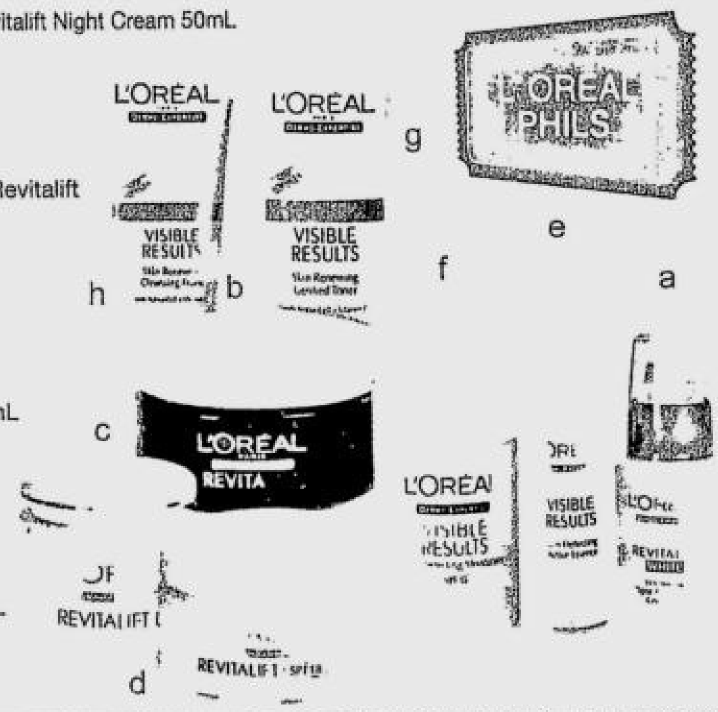
- a. **JPE** Pretty Powder Pink 50g
  22.75
- b. **JPE** Compact Beige Fresh & Smooth 10g
  99.75
- c. **JPE** Compact White Fresh & Smooth 10g
  99.75
- d. **Neutrogena** Fine Fairness Natural Beige / Light Beige Compact
  642.75
- e. **Neutrogena** Fine Fairness Facial Lotion
  424.75
- f. **Neutrogena** Fine Fairness Cleanser 100g
  207.75
- g. **Neutrogena** Fine Fairness Mask
  152.75

JOHNSON & JOHNSON


a
d
g
b
PURE ESSENTIALS
Neutrogena
Fine Fairness
MASK
Fine Fairness
CLEANSER
e
c
f

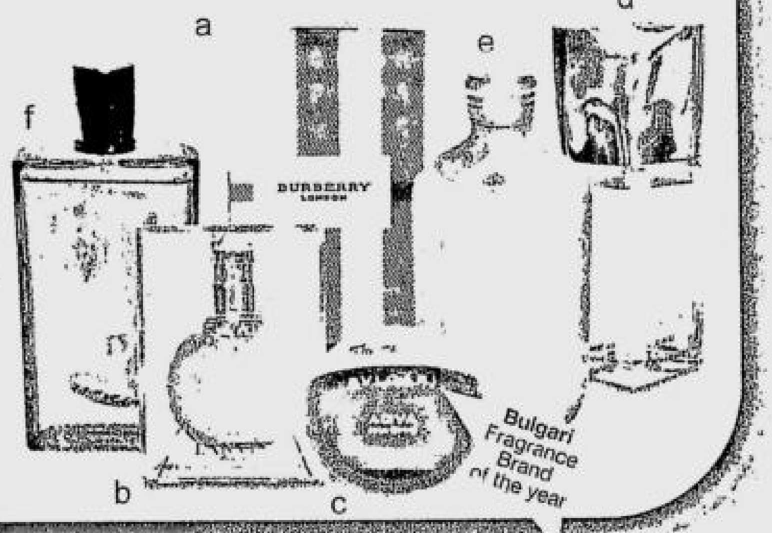
- a. **L'Oreal** Dermo Expert Revitalift White 30mL
  995.00
- b. **L'Oreal** Dermo Expert Revitalift Night Cream 50mL
  875.00
- c. **L'Oreal** Dermo Expert Revitalift Eye 15mL
  875.00
- d. **L'Oreal** Dermo Expert Revitalift Cream SPF 18 50mL
  845.00
- e. **L'Oreal** Visible Results Essence 30mL
  995.00
- f. **L'Oreal** Visible Results Moisturizer SPF 15 50mL
  845.00
- g. **L'Oreal** Visible Results Toner 200mL
  345.00
- h. **L'Oreal** Visible Results Cleansing Foam 100mL
  245.00

L'OREAL PHILS


L'ORÉAL
VISIBLE RESULTS
h
b
g
e
f
a
c
L'ORÉAL
REVITA
REVITALIFT
d
REVITALIFT · SPF18
VISIBLE RESULTS
REVITAL WHITE

- a. **Burberry** London Women
  4,600.00 100 mL
  3,400.00 50 mL
  2,400.00 30 mL
- b. **Lanvin Eclat** (Women)
  4,500.00 100 mL
  3,298.00 50 mL
  2,450.00 30 mL
- c. **Bulgari Aqua for Homme**
  4,598.00 100 mL
  3,250.00 50 mL
- d. **L'eau Bleue D'Issey Eau Fraiche**
  2,750.00 75 mL
  1,950.00 40 mL
- e. **CK One** Summer '06
  3,050 100 mL
- f. **Cool Water** Game Men
  3,850.00 100 mL
  2,650.00 50 mL
  1,950.00 30 mL
- g. **Zirh** Clean
  1,198.00 250 mL
- h. **Shiseido** Autumn Collection

LUXASIA INC


a
d
e
f
BURBERRY LONDON
b
c
Bulgari Fragrance Brand of the year

- a. **Ever Bilena** Pallete Make-up Set
  250.00 ea
- b. **Ever Bilena** Cheek Blush 10 g
  120.00 ea
- c. **Ever Bilena** Expressive Eyes 4
  150.00 ea
- d. **Ever Bilena** Pro Longwear Lipstick 3.8 g
  120.00 ea
- e. **Ever Bilena** Pro Longwear Lip Gloss
  100.00 ea
- f. **Ever Bilena** Silkening Body Lotion
  165.00 ea 236 mL
  65.00 ea 59 mL
- g. **Ever Bilena** Silkening Body Spray
  165.00 ea 236 mL
  65.00 ea 59 mL
- h. **Careline** Body Lotion
  Juniper & Evergreen/ Citrus & Basil/ Cucumber & Melon/ Freesia & Blossom
  165.00 ea 236 mL
  65.00 ea 59 mL
- i. **Careline** Nail Polish 6 mL
  24.00 ea
- j. **Careline** Body Spray
  165.00 ea 236 mL
  65.00 ea 59 mL

EVER BILENA COSMETICS INC
Philippine Supplier of the Year

j
g
h
Ever Bilena
Popular Cosmetics Brand of the year
a
d
e
Careline
Careline
SILKENING BODY LOTION
c
b
f
i

- a. **Myra-E** 400IU x 8 Pack
  82.00
- b. **Myra-E** 400IU Capsule
  10.25 ea
- c. **Myra-E** 300IU Capsule
  7.40 ea
- d. **Solmux** Capsule 500mg Mucolytic
  10.20 ea
- e. **Solmux** Capsule 500mg Mucolytic x 4 Pack
  40.80
- f. **Neozep** Forte Ref Tablet
  3.65 ea
- g. **Neozep** Non-Drowsy Tab x 5 Pack
  20.50
- h. **Biogesic** Tablet 500mg x 20 Pack
  53.00
- i. **Biogesic** Tablet 500mg
  2.65 ea
- j. **Diatabs** Ref Cap 2mg
  6.25 ea
- k. **Diatabs** Ref Cap 2mg x 4 Pack
  25.00
- l. **Kremil S** Ref Tab
  3.75 ea
- m. **Kremil S** Ref Tab x 8 Pack
  30.15
- n. **Kremil S** Extra Strength Tab
  7.15 ea
- o. **Alaxan FR** Capsule
  7.50 ea
- p. **Alaxan Gel** 30g
  60.65
- q. **Alaxan Tablet**
  6.00 ea
- r. **Enervon C** Tab x 30 (bottle)
  148.45
- s. **Enervon C** Flex Foil
  4.95 ea

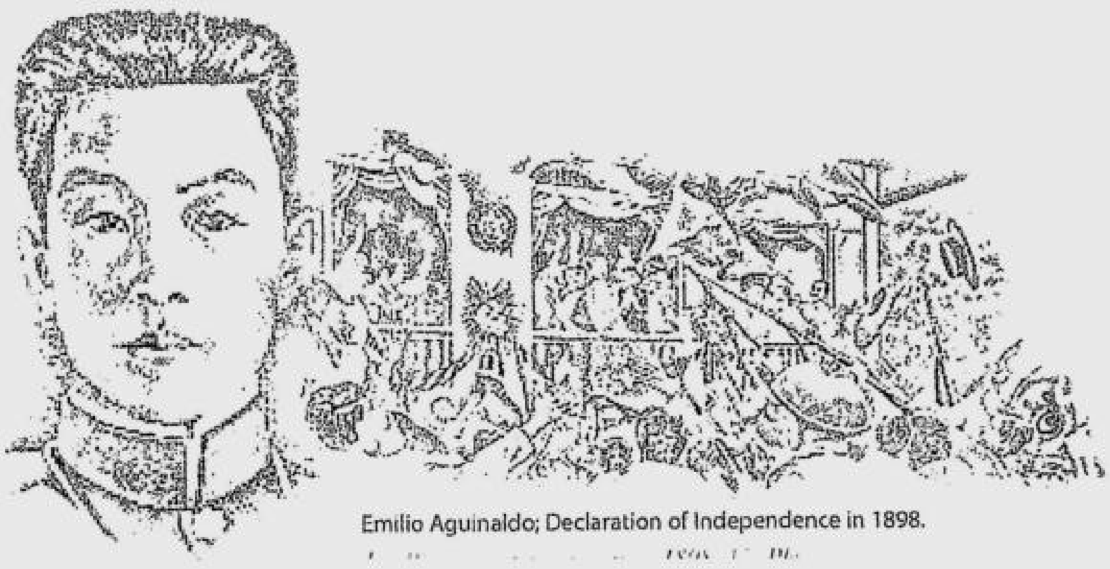
UNITED LABORATORIES
Promotions Partner for Health

- Best In-Store Promo Activities
- Children's Vitamin Brand of The Year-**Ceelin**
- ACE Inhibitor Brand of The Year-**Norten**
- Generic Brand of The Year-**Ritemed**
- Key Account Manager-**Alvy Posadas**

g
Neozep Forte Cold Preparation Brand of the year
h
e
a
The Total Cold Specialist.
Relieves runny nose, headache, clogged nose, and body pains
PARACETAMOL
BIOGESIC
Carbocisteine Solmux
MYRA-E
MULTIVITAMINS
ENERVON-C Tablet
r
Loperamide
Diatabs
PARACETAMOL
BIOGESIC
NEOZEP FORTE Tablet
ANTIPYRETIC
Biogesic Analgesic Brand of the year
IBUPROFEN · PARACETAMOL
ALAXAN
Kremil-S
Solmux Cough Remedy Brand of the year
k
o
l

When Patriots Dream

Multi-sectoral coalition vow to hasten steps towards RP nationhood



Emilio Aguinaldo; Declaration of Independence in 1898.

ON THE DAY the Philippines declared its independence from Spanish rule in 1898, only a handful of people gathered in front of a balcony in Cavite to represent the voice of the entire nation.

"What the country had achieved was to declare the creation of a Philippine state. Until today, we have yet to realize our dream of becoming one true nation," said Paul Dumol, Filipino historian and playwright. "We are not yet a nation. What we really are is a nation in progress."

Today, as the country celebrates National Heroes Day, a broad coalition of various sectors and key leaders of local government units will launch a deliberate and well-planned initiative to finally bring the Philippines closer to the dream.

The initiative, dubbed Mahal Ko ang Pilipinas, represents an unprecedented move to unite the country towards a common goal: NATIONHOOD. The move is being done simultaneously by anchor stakeholders, which currently involves 21 cities and a coalition of sectors at both local and national levels. The whole-day event at the Hotel Philippine Plaza highlights the unveiling of the "Philippines 2030 Road Map" and the "Dream Cities."

The national road map for 2030 drafted by sectoral leaders September last year will also be unveiled today. This includes the collective plan of nine sectors: the youth, academe, business, media, civic and professional organizations, labor, the Church, and the military.

"Nine sectors, thinking together and building bridges to each other, indeed in greater solidarity with each other, to promote the common cause of our nation," said Jesus P. Estanislao, founder and president of the Institute for Solidarity in Asia (ISA).

Also to be unveiled is the progress report or the "PGS scorecards" of 21 cities that have mapped out 20- to 25-year visions to attain the status of being "Dream Cities."

ISA, an independent, not-for-profit, non-partisan organization started work with Dream Cities in 2004. These cities are already in various stages of implementing their comprehensive programs called "road maps." ISA used a Harvard-devised business tool called the "balanced scorecard" and applied it on LGUs to track their progress against a key set of targets. The result is the Public Governance System (PGS) which, not only enables constituents to participate in public governance, but also ensures that programs can be continued regardless of who holds the seat at City Hall.

Of the 21 cities, eight have been declared compliant with the PGS process. These are: Calbayog City, Iloilo City, Marikina City, Naga City, San Fernando City in La Union, San Fernando City in Pampanga, Sorsogon City, and Tagbilaran City. Thirteen other cities are in various stages of PGS institutionalization. Newly initiated are the cities of Dagupan, Iriga, Ligao, Panabo and Tuguegarao.

Eight cities are in an advanced stage of installing the PGS while thirteen have completed their City Road Map. A road map refers to the plan a city has laid out to attain its aspiration of becoming a "Dream City."

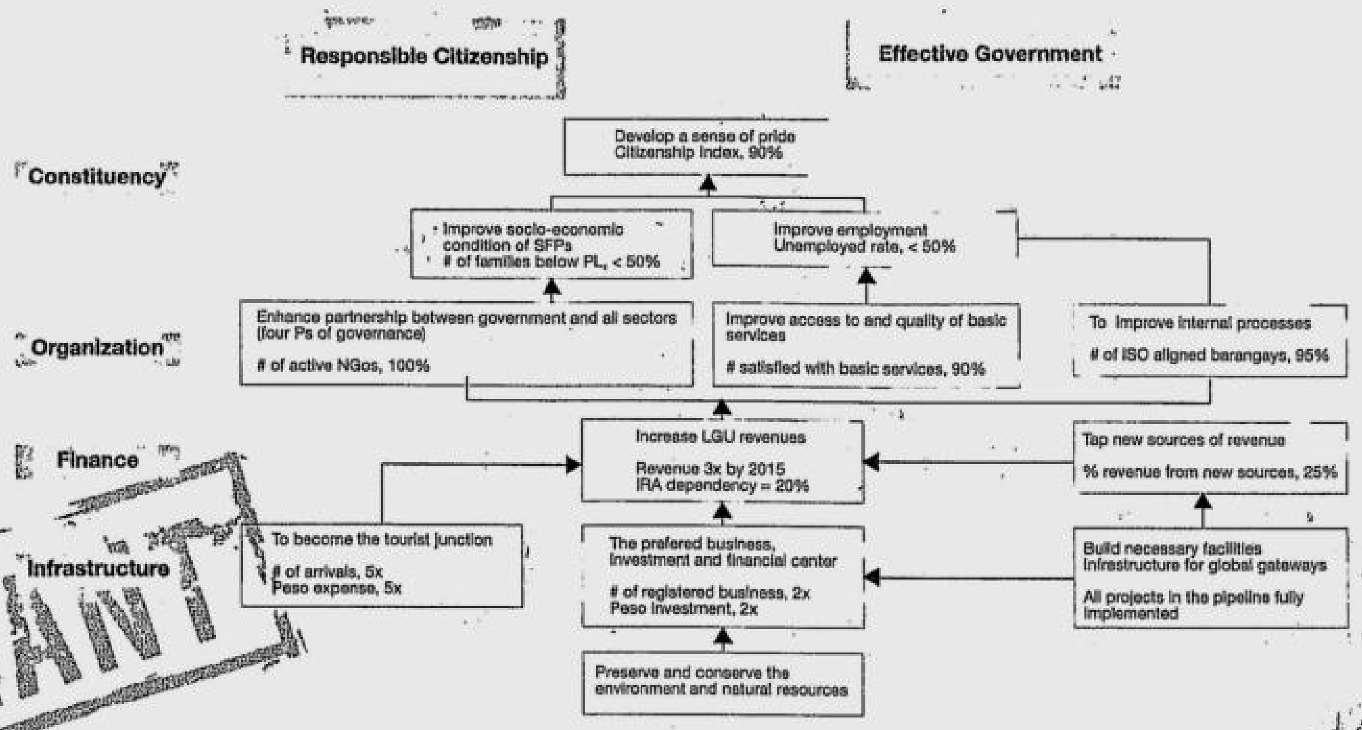
"Dream Cities are places where citizens live in prosperity in an environment where governance is a shared responsibility between the people and their leaders," said Estanislao. "We have invited 10 new cities to begin the journey."

Supporting ISA's initiative is the Washington, D.C.-based Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), a non-profit affiliate of the United States Chamber of Commerce and one of the four core institutes of the National Endowment for Democracy.

CIPE Chairman Gregori Lebedev, and executive director John D. Sullivan flew to Manila to attend the conference. CIPE has supported more than 920 local initiatives in 105 developing countries, involving the private sector in policy advocacy and institutional reform, improving governance, and building understanding of market-based democratic systems. CIPE programs are also supported through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Speaking at the Mahal Ko Ang Pilipinas conference are noted personalities that include: Eugenia D. Apostol, 2006 Ramon Magsaysay Awardee for Journalism, Literature, and Creative Communication Arts; Rex C. Drilon II, chief operating officer of Ortigas Company and Limited Partnership and an ISA Fellow; Evelyn R. Singson, president of the Management Association of the Philippines, who will unveil the road map of the business sector; Maria A.Ressa, senior vice president for News and Current Affairs of ABS-CBN; and Alexander L. Lacson, author of the best-seller, Twelve Little Things Every Filipino Can Do To Help Our Country.

City of San Fernando Pampanga: Gateway to North Philippines by 2015

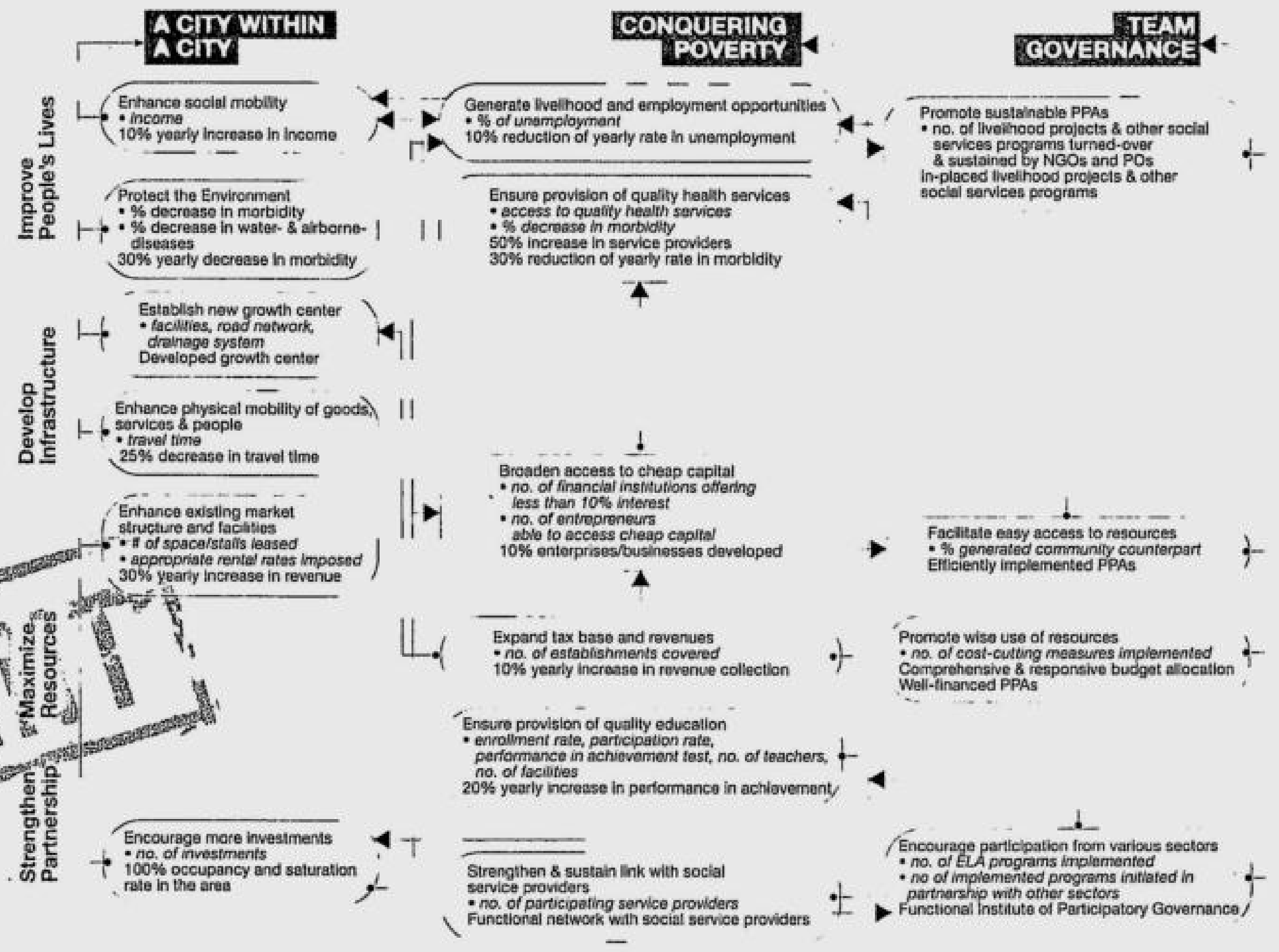


Responsible Citizenship
Effective Government
Constituency
Organization
Finance
Infrastructure
Develop a sense of pride
Citizenship index, 90%
Improve socio-economic condition of SFPs
# of families below PL, < 50%
Improve employment
Unemployed rate, < 50%
Enhance partnership between government and all sectors (four Ps of governance)
# of active NGos, 100%
Improve access to and quality of basic services
# satisfied with basic services, 90%
To Improve internal processes
# of ISO aligned barangays, 95%
Increase LGU revenues
Revenue 3x by 2015
IRA dependency = 20%
Tap new sources of revenue
% revenue from new sources, 25%
To become the tourist junction
# of arrivals, 5x
Peso expense, 5x
The prefered business, investment and financial center
# of registered business, 2x
Peso investment, 2x
Build necessary facilities
Infrastructure for global gateways
All projects in the pipeline fully implemented
Preserve and conserve the environment and natural resources

PGS
PUBLIC GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

COMPLIANT

Tagbilaran:
a prime eco-cultural tourism hub by 2015



A CITY WITHIN A CITY
CONQUERING POVERTY
TEAM GOVERNANCE
Improve People's Lives
Develop Infrastructure
Maximize Resources
Strengthen Partnership
Enhance social mobility
• income
10% yearly increase in income
Protect the Environment
• % decrease in morbidity
• % decrease in water- & airborne-diseases
30% yearly decrease in morbidity
Establish new growth center
• facilities, road network, drainage system
Developed growth center
Enhance physical mobility of goods, services & people
• travel time
25% decrease in travel time
Enhance existing market structure and facilities
• # of space/stalls leased
• appropriate rental rates imposed
30% yearly increase in revenue
Encourage more investments
• no. of investments
100% occupancy and saturation rate in the area
Generate livelihood and employment opportunities
• % of unemployment
10% reduction of yearly rate in unemployment
Ensure provision of quality health services
• access to quality health services
• % decrease in morbidity
50% increase in service providers
30% reduction of yearly rate in morbidity
Broaden access to cheap capital
• no. of financial institutions offering less than 10% interest
• no. of entrepreneurs able to access cheap capital
10% enterprises/businesses developed
Expand tax base and revenues
• no. of establishments covered
10% yearly increase in revenue collection
Ensure provision of quality education
• enrollment rate, participation rate, performance in achievement test, no. of teachers, no. of facilities
20% yearly increase in performance in achievement
Strengthen & sustain link with social service providers
• no. of participating service providers
Functional network with social service providers
Promote sustainable PPAs
• no. of livelihood projects & other social services programs turned-over & sustained by NGOs and POs
In-placed livelihood projects & other social services programs
Facilitate easy access to resources
• % generated community counterpart
Efficiently implemented PPAs
Promote wise use of resources
• no. of cost-cutting measures implemented
Comprehensive & responsive budget allocation
Well-financed PPAs
Encourage participation from various sectors
• no. of ELA programs implemented
• no of implemented programs initiated in partnership with other sectors
Functional Institute of Participatory Governance

PGS
PUBLIC GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

COMPLIANT

DREAM CITY

PGS-COMPLIANT CITIES

CALBAYOG
ONE ISLAND, ONE PEOPLE, ONE CULTURE BY 2015
Mel Senen S. Sarmiento,
City Mayor
Esteban M. Conchas
PGS Coalition Co-Chair
Merla Rosalado & Estanislao Cortado
PGS Technical Team

ILOILO
A PREMIER CITY BY 2015
Jerry P. Treñas
City Mayor
Francis Gentoral
PGS Coalition Co-Chair
Benito Jimena & Jose Roni Peñalosa
PGS Technical Team

MARIKINA
A MODEL CITY IN COMPETITIVENESS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA BY 2015
Marides C. Fernando
City Mayor
Tomas C. Aguilar
PGS Coalition Co-Chair
Tomas Aguilar & Julie Borje
PGS Technical Team

NAGA
MAOGMANG CIUDADANO SA MAOGMANG LUGAR BY 2015
Jesse M. Robredo
City Mayor
Dave Bercasio
Naga City People's Council
Fracisco Mendoza & Dave Bercasio
PGS Techinical Team

SAN FERNANDO LA UNION
A BOTANICAL GARDEN CITY BY 2010
Mary Jane C. Ortega
City Mayor
Jerry V. Parlan
SFLU Solidarity President
Anjanette Dimaculangan & Liza Estrella
PGS Technical Team

SAN FERNANDO PAMPANGA
GATEWAY TO NORTH PHILIPPINES BY 2015
Oscar M. Rodriguez
City Mayor
Fr. Restituto Lumanlan
Multi-Sectoral Governance Council Co-Chair
Sonia Soto, Ferdinand Caylao, Rene Romero & Renato Santos
PGS Technical Team

SORSOGON
A PROGRESSIVE GATEWAY TO THE SOUTH BY 2015
Sally Ante-Lee
City Mayor
Irma A. Guhit
PGS Coaltion Co-Chair
Orlando Huenda, Robert Rodrigueza & Joni Olves
PGS Technical Team

TAGBILARAN
A PRIME ECO-CULTURAL TOURISM HUB BY 2015
Dan Neri Lim
City Mayor
Nuevas Tirol-Montes
PGS Coalition Co-Chair
Eduardo Macalandag, Kurt Bungabong & Lucille Yap
PGS Technical Team

PGS-INITIATED CITIES

Dagupan
Dapitan
Dumaguete
Iriga
Island Garden City of Samal
Ligao
Panabo
Tacurong
Tagaytay
Tangub
Toledo
Tuguegarao

We give you more than just a regular bank account.

ValueCheck&Save

The convenience of a checking account.
The ease of a savings account.
Stacked together as one.

Issue checks for cashless payouts & payments
Monitor transactions with your Passbook
Enjoy 24-hour ATM access
Earn interest

Looking after you.
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We're here to give you more. Open your Value Check & Save account today.

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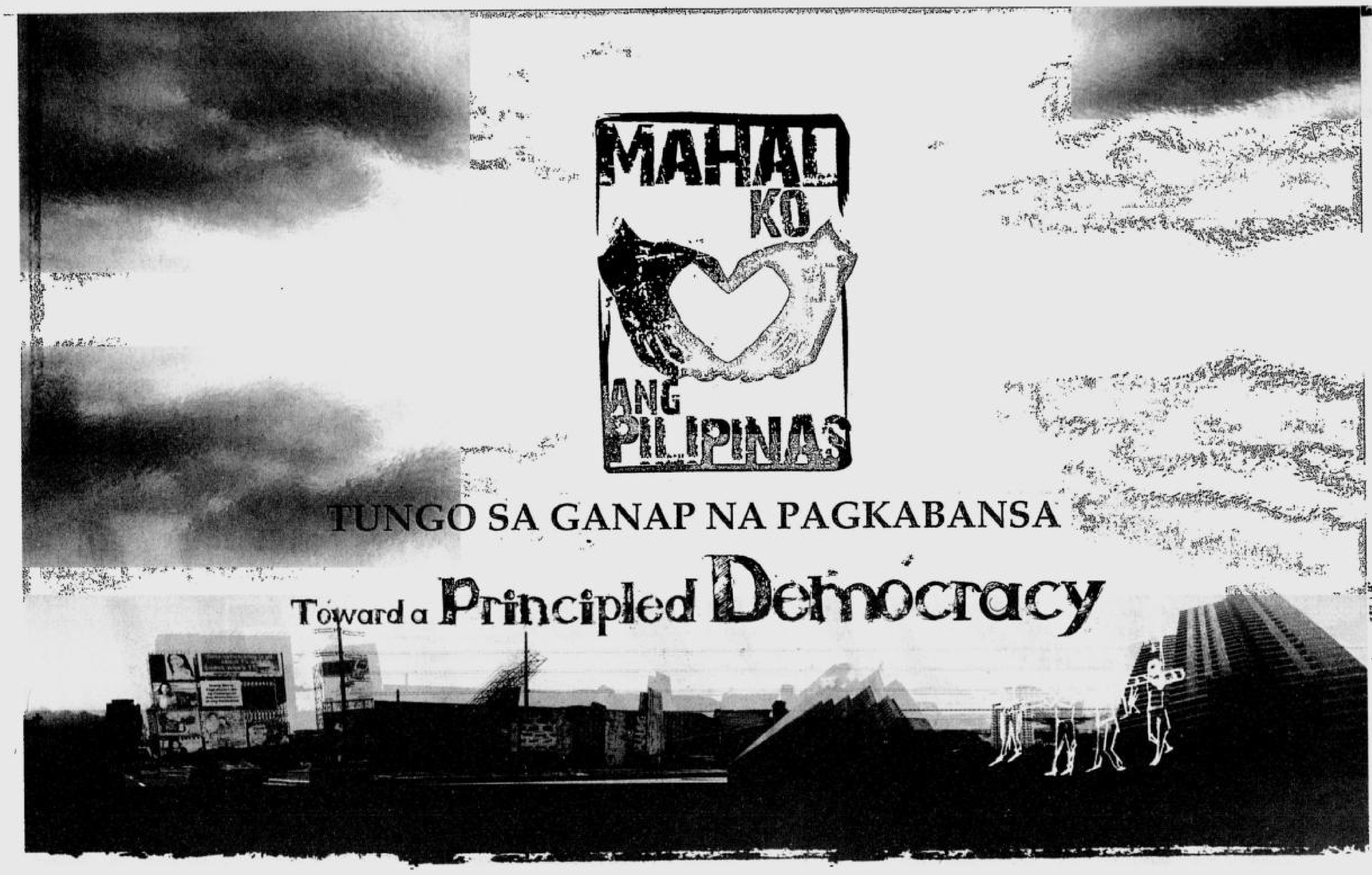

TUNGO SA GANAP NA PAGKABANSA

Toward a Principled Democracy

We believe that –

The common good of the country and of our people is the principal purpose for the constitutional order, the law and its processes.

For the common good to prosper, right values must be allowed to take roots, justice to prevail and participatory citizenship to be encouraged.

The system of government with its chain of authority and command as well as the constitutional order that underpins it must be made to work---and must be seen to work--for good governance, characterized by fairness, transparency, accountability, ethics and social responsibility.

By these fundamental principles, all institutions need to operate and work towards deep and meaningful reforms.

These reforms should be genuine and designed to promote the long-term common good of the Filipino people.

Reforms, to be genuine and long-lasting, have to be initiated and sustained mainly from the ground up.

This is the real revolution the country needs -- a radical change in the way people think and make demands: with each one of us asking what we can do for our country, before demanding what leaders from the top should be doing for us.

At the forefront of these reforms are individuals and families, schools and business enterprises, whose commitment to the common good and the welfare of others has to be deepened and made real through concrete deeds every day.

Different sectors of society are called upon to rally behind this common banner and strengthen the bonds that unite them, enabling them to work more effectively for a common cause.

The public governance of our nation demands a common sense of purpose that inspires the positive involvement of all citizens and public officials, and provides them the tools to demonstrate their genuine love for our country; for this purpose, the **Philippines 2030 Governance Road Map** that guides our actions over a generation is formulated and then vigorously as well as systematically pursued.

CONVENOR

Institute for Solidarity in Asia

CO-CONVENORS

Calbayog
Iloilo
Marikina
Naga
San Fernando La Union
San Fernando Pampanga
Sorsogon
Tagaytay
Tagbilaran
Tuguegarao

ANCHORS FOR ACADEME

Foundation for Worldwide People Power
Moral Recovery Officers Foundation Inc.
National Association of Public Secondary School Heads Inc.
National Council of Educational Innovators
Philippine Council of Deans and Educators in Business

ANCHORS FOR BUSINESS

Institute of Corporate Directors
Management Association of the Philippines

ANCHOR FOR MEDIA

Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas

ANCHORS FOR THE PROFESSIONS

Marine Engineers Association of the Philippines
Master and Mates Association of the Philippines
National Organization of Professional Teachers Inc.
Philippine Dental Association
Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants
Philippine Medical Association
Philippine Nurses Association
Philippine Veterinary Medical Association
United Architects of the Philippines,
and their respective Professional Regulatory Boards

ANCHORS FOR THE YOUTH

AIESEC Philippines
Building Bridges Foundation
Children International-Abot Kamay
Corps of Cadets of the Armed Forces of the Philippines
Galing Pilipino Movement
Ortigas Foundation
Philippine Junior Marketing Association
Politeia
Rotaract District 3770
Rotaract District 3801
Rotaract District 3820
Solvente
Student's Action Vital to the Environment
and Mother Earth Movement
Youth Alliance Philippines

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

CIPE
NED
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Natrapharm

PROGRAM SPONSORS

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DBP Development Bank of the Philippines
Equitable PCI Bank
PLDT
UNIONBANK

EVENT SPONSORS

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GLOBE TELECOM
METROBANK FOUNDATION, INC.
ORTIGAS FOUNDATION, INC.
PENSHOPPE
SAN MIGUEL CORPORATION
St. Peter Life Plan, Inc. *The Deathcare Experts*
Unilever

MEDIA PARTNERS

GMA *Kapuso ng bawat Pilipino*
ABS-CBN
Philippine Daily Inquirer
Brandpartner Inc.
Writers Edge
Yehey!

ISA Fellows

Jesus P. Estanislao
Founding Fellow
Chairman, Institute for Solidarity in Asia

Cristolito P. Balaoing, AFP (Ret)
Former Superintendent, Philippine Military Academy

Cesar B. Bautista
Trustee, Institute of Corporate Directors

Eric S. Canoy
President, Radio Mindanao Network

Pericles P. Dakay
President, Dakay Construction and Development Corporation

Rex C. Drilon II
COO, Ortigas & Company Ltd. Partnership

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Vice President, University of Asia and the Pacific

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Antonieta Fortuna-Ibe
Partner, KPMG Laya Mananghaya

Evelyn R. Singson
President, Management Association of the Philippines

Mario Rogelio P. Antalan
Mayor, Island Garden City of Samal

Maria Lourdes C. Fernando
Mayor, Marikina City

Madelaine Alfelor-Gazmen
Mayor, Iriga City

Rey P. Gavina
Mayor, Panabo City

Linda P. Gonzalez
Mayor, Ligao City

Sally Ante-Lee
Mayor, Sorsogon City

Benjamin S. Lim
Mayor, Dagupan City

Dan N. Lim
Mayor, Tagbilaran City

Lino O. Montilla
Mayor, Tacurong City

Mary Jane C. Ortega
Mayor, San Fernando La Union

Agustin R. Perdices
Mayor, Dumaguete City

Jesse M. Robredo
Mayor, Naga City

Oscar M. Rodriguez
Mayor, San Fernando Pampanga

Mel Senen S. Sarmiento
Mayor, Calbayog City

Jennifer Wee-Tan
Mayor, Tangub City

Randolph S. Ting
Mayor, Tuguegarao City

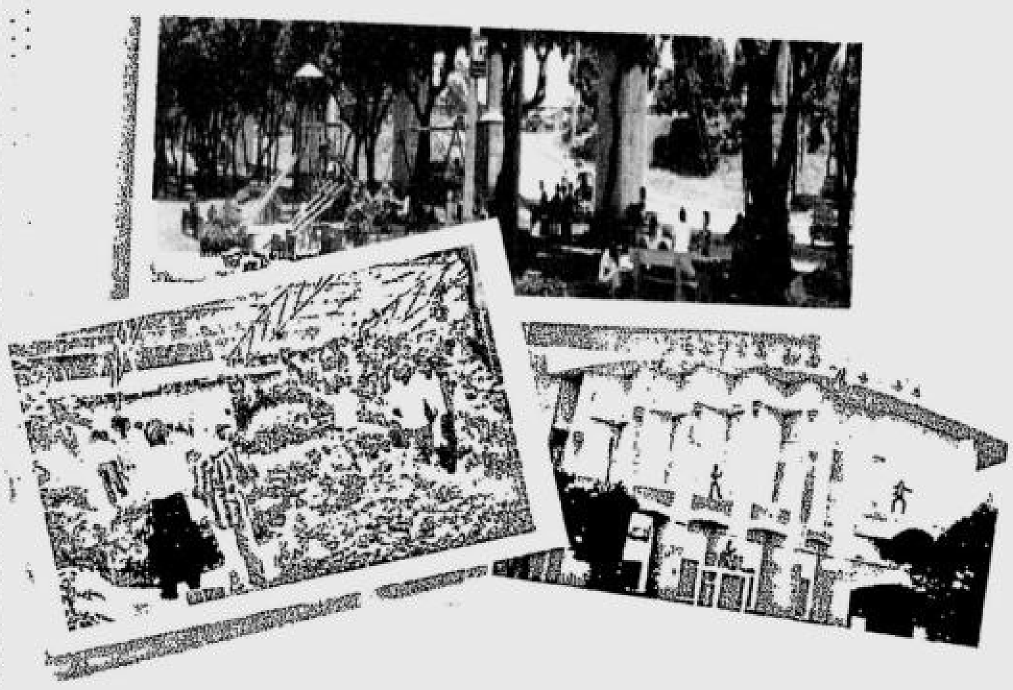
Abraham N. Tolentino
Mayor, Tagaytay City

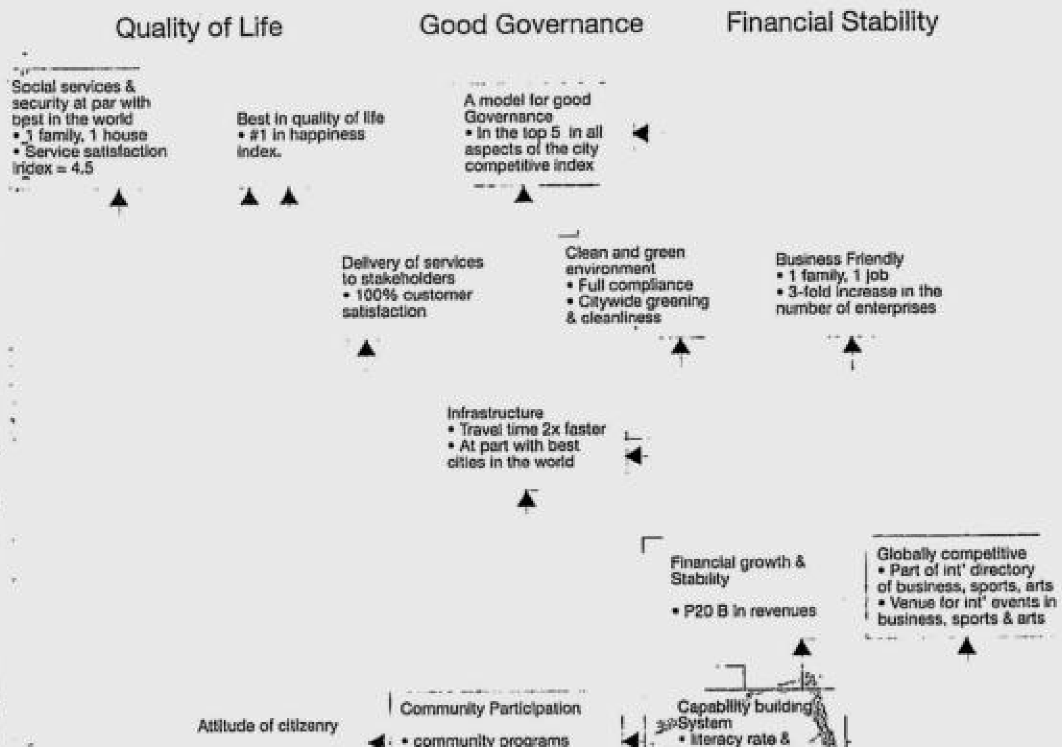
Jerry P. Treñas
Mayor, Iloilo City

Arlene Espinosa-Zambo
Mayor, Toledo City

ISA
INSTITUTE FOR
SOLIDARITY
IN ASIA

Marikina:
Model City in Competitiveness in Southeast Asia by 2015





Quality of Life
Good Governance
Financial Stability

Social services & security at par with best in the world
- 1 family, 1 house
- Service satisfaction index = 4.5

Best in quality of life
- #1 in happiness index.

A model for good Governance
- In the top 5 in all aspects of the city competitive index

Delivery of services to stakeholders
- 100% customer satisfaction

Clean and green environment
- Full compliance
- Citywide greening & cleanliness

Business Friendly
- 1 family, 1 job
- 3-fold increase in the number of enterprises

Infrastructure
- Travel time 2x faster
- At part with best cities in the world

Financial growth & Stability
- P20 B in revenues

Globally competitive
- Part of int' directory of business, sports, arts
- Venue for int' events in business, sports & arts

Attitude of citizenry
- Zero unrest

Community Participation
- community programs 100% organized and managed by private sector

Capability building System
- literacy rate & productivity at par with top cities

COMPLIANT

PGS
PUBLIC GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

LUNGSOD NG MARIKINA
1630 · PILIPINAS · 1996

"Gusto ko all-out kulitxtan sa halagang ₱25 lang!"

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CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Rex C. Drilon II, COO of the Ortigas Company, led the group that crafted the business Road Map. How wealth creation can be honorable, entrepreneurship enlightened, and income distribution equitable are part of the vision for a globally competitive Philippine business. How to get there he will tackle.

Following the lead of the Philippine Military Academy, the Marines and the Navy Fleet had separate governance retreats to develop their Road Maps. Brigadier General Nelson N. Allaga and top marine officers will present the game plan for the transformation of this branch of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

After nearly two decades with CNN, Maria A. Ressa sets out to bring good governance in a major network and thus in Philippine media in her capacity as Senior Vice President for News and Current Affairs of ABS-CBN. The role of media in governance and governance in media will be discussed in trademark Ressa passion.

Alexander L. Lacson made history with the success of his first book, proof that optimists outnumber those who have given up on the Philippines. Many are looking for something do-able to move the country forward. Alex will challenge especially those who complain about everything to show love for the motherland not only thru words but deeds.

Foreign Observers

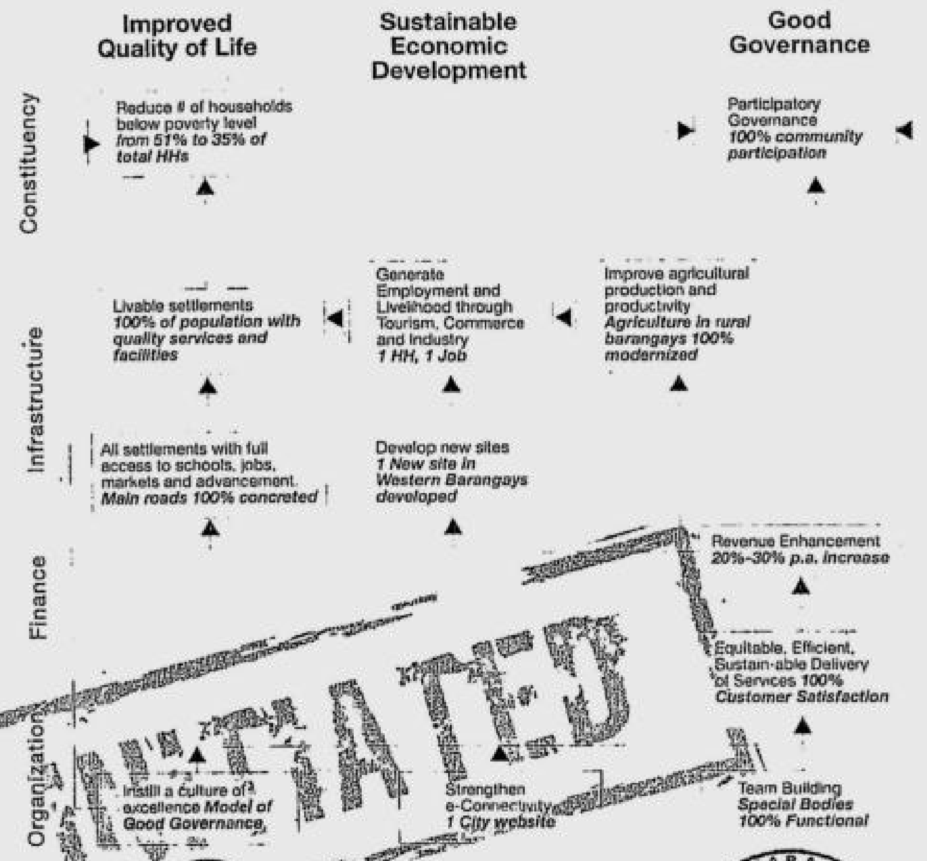
Gregori Lebedev
Chairman, Center for International Private Enterprise
Washington, DC

John Sullivan
Executive Director, Center for International Private Enterprise
Washington, DC

Boonchai Hongcharu
Dean, National Institute of Development Administration
Bangkok

Marcelino Pandin
Program Director, Parliament Leader Program
Jakarta

Tuguegarao City:
Premier Ibanag City by 2020



Improved Quality of Life
Sustainable Economic Development
Good Governance

Constituency
Reduce # of households below poverty level *from 51% to 35% of total HHs*
Participatory Governance *100% community participation*

Infrastructure
Livable settlements *100% of population with quality services and facilities*
Generate Employment and Livelihood through Tourism, Commerce and Industry *1 HH, 1 Job*
Improve agricultural production and productivity *Agriculture in rural barangays 100% modernized*
All settlements with full access to schools, jobs, markets and advancement. *Main roads 100% concreted*
Develop new sites *1 New site in Western Barangays developed*

Finance
Revenue Enhancement *20%-30% p.a. increase*
Equitable, Efficient, Sustain-able Delivery of Services 100% *Customer Satisfaction*

Organization
Instill a culture of excellence *Model of Good Governance*
Strengthen e-Connectivity *1 City website*
Team Building *Special Bodies 100% Functional*

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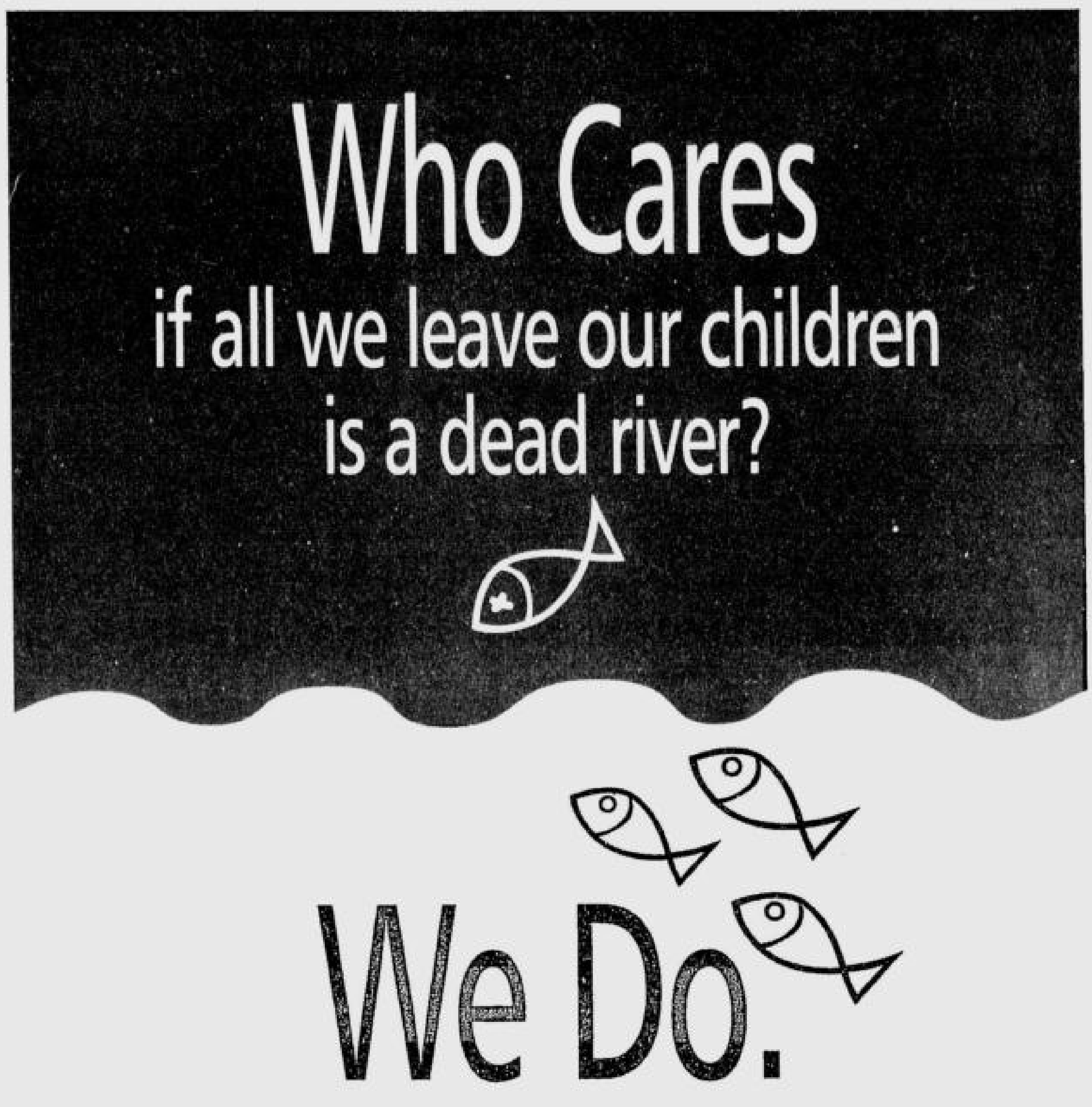
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if all we leave our children
is a dead river?
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